■ Sports
Pistons a win shy of NBA title

■ Lifestyle / C1
Doctor's orders! A little pampering

■ Entertainment / A9
'I've learned how to live without a man'

■ Across / A15
Army troops foil NPA raid on Negros base

■ Real Estate / A18
Ghost subdivision sold to low-income families

BIR exec fails lifestyle check, gets suspended

ANOTHER stalwart of the Bureau of Internal Revenue has failed the government's lifestyle check.

Yet failing to explain the huge increase in his net worth in 2002, Quezon City BIR Collector Nestor S. Valderoso was ordered suspended by the Office of the Ombudsman.

Since the government started its lifestyle

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'Bomb' ingredients: Bra, shorts, CD, etc.

By Lala B. Salaverria and Philip C. Tubeza

CABUYAO: Acquisitions, purchases and other documents over the years help to dismantle what they considered was a bomb-making

Tuesday, June 15, 2004 • 32 pages / vol. 19 / no. 188
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Pinoy killed in Iraq blast

MEN dance on a vehicle in front of a building damaged by a car bomb in central Baghdad. The attack happened during rush hour on one of the Iraqi capital's busiest roads on Monday morning. AP

11 more dead, 50 hurt in suicide car bombing

BAGHDAD—A suicide car bombing in the heart of the Iraqi capital on Monday killed at least 12 people, including a Filipino working for US power giant General Electric, and wounded more than 50 others in an upsurge of violence ahead of the June 30 handover of sovereignty to Iraq.

The second suicide bombing in Baghdad in 24 hours coincided with a wave of assassinations aimed at the new interim government appointed to take over from US forces in preparation for the transfer of sovereignty on June 30.

The US-led coalition "told us that two British, one American, one French national and nine Filipinos were among the dead" in the morning rush-hour attack on the east bank of the Tigris river, a diplomatic source told Agence France-Presse.

"Their bodies have been taken to a morgue at the Baghdad airport," the diplomat added, saying that the five contractors had been working for General Electric.

In Manila, however, the Department of Foreign Affairs said it was still verifying reports that a Filipino worker was among those killed in Monday's car bombing. So far, three Filipinos—a seafarer, a truck driver and a humanitarian worker—have lost their lives in the US-led war on Iraq.

Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi condemned that the foreign workers had been killed in the attack, which devastated a busy street and ripped the heart off one building. He did not name their nationalities.

"Today's explosion targeted foreign workers working in the rebuilding of electricity works. Five of them were killed and three were lightly wounded," Allawi said at a news conference.

"The terrorists are trying to prevent the transfer of power and sovereignty on June 30," he said.

In addition to the foreign casualties, at least seven Iraqis were killed and about 50 others were wounded in the bombing, according to a nurse compiled from three local hospitals.

An AFP photographer saw a

Canvassing leaders won't open bags of vote tallies

By Cecille D. Suerte and Christine O. Avendaño

ACCEPTING an administration challenge to produce evidence of cheating, opposition lawyers yesterday brought in four heavy bags containing what they said were protected vote tallies that would prove guilt found.

They were set to open them—

Saying there was no need to prolong the nation's agony, the leadership of the joint congressional canvassing committee ordered opposition demands for the documents in the bags to be matched as evidence.

The documents supposedly included election returns (ERs) and statements of votes (SoVs) from Sarangani del Sur, Sarangani del Norte, Agusan del Sur and Agusan del Norte.

"When we speak of evidence, this is not the proper forum," House Speaker Jose De Venecia, co-chair of the 33-member committee, said.

"We are not here to prolong the agony. We are here to canvass," he said firmly.

Allegations of cheating in that gubernatorial race include a claim that about 10,000 votes were "shaved" but that the fault lay not originally particularly in Bandumen, contained a purportedly "fine-tuned" entry of 18,203 votes.

Nene Belluntes, lawyer for presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., moved to defer the canvass for the province on grounds that the document did not appear to be authentic.

Belluntes also told the committee the opposition had dozens of alleged anomalies in tallies

Opposition readies 2nd SC case to stop canvassing

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE 12TH Congress is dead—untimbed, in fact—and can no longer entertain the votes for president.

The opposition raised this argument yesterday as it prepared to file a second lawsuit in the Supreme Court in a move that could throw more obstacles to the proclamation of the country's next president.

"A Congress is legally dead and constitutionally encumbered," declared Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said in a memorandum to the 33-member congressional canvassing committee.

The projected lawsuit will ask the high court to decide whether the canvassing panel would still tabulate the votes for president and vice president after Congress has last week indefinitely adjourned its session.

Opposition Sen. Vicente Sotto III stressed that the lawsuit was not meant to delay the vote canvassing.

Pimentel was expected to file the lawsuit yesterday Sotto said. But by 6 p.m., long after the deadline, no action had shaped for the day.

Gov. Padaca 'more relieved than happy'

By Marvin P. Mariñas

MR. GRACIA Cielo Padaca, 40, was finally proclaimed yesterday as governor of Isabela.

The political neophyte promptly called for a reconciliation "based on justice" with the ramp of former Gov. Faustino "Dy Jr., who tried up till the final hour to thwart the much-delayed process.

She felt "more relieved than happy," Padaca said, exasperated, after the 12-hour proclamation at the Commission on Elections session hall that followed two hours of heated legal arguments. "This has taken too long. Now we can all go back to the province."

With several alleged Lomokratiko party stares and supporters, Padaca has been in Manila since May 22, when the proclamation was initially set. "Do people expect me to be ecstatic over this? No I am not," she said.

Also proclaimed yesterday were Anthony Miranda as vice governor for Isabela's 4th District, Ramon Reyes as vice governor, and two members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

After her initial outburst, the new governor said he must show mercy for those concerned to forget the hatred spawned by the campaign. She explained: "I am

AFTER A LONG wait, Grace Padaca (center) is finally proclaimed governor of Isabela. With her are Rep. Anthony Miranda (left) and Vice Gov. Ramon Reyes (right).

CARTEL, sec., but Abaya says nobody is gaining the least by the controversial deal.

More AFP supply 'irregularities' bared

By Alcuin Papa

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL system in the Armed Forces of the Philippines is occupied that a company supplying defective ammunition that was more than technologically superior ammunition offered by another firm won a contract with it, according to a lawmaker on Monday.

"It's a similar pit. There is an transparency in the system and the person sees an chink that even if you are good, they will want you to do bad things," said Rochelle Barzaga, vice president of Nueva Ecija Inc. (Inec) in the Philippines, a company that has voted its bids supplying ammunition to the military.

Barzaga said the controversy over the acquisition of combat boots "is just the tip of the iceberg," adding that she knew of irregularities involving contracts involving the AFP that were under investigation by the Office of the Ombudsman.

"If the corrupt system of procurement in the military is not corrected, no supplier here and abroad will consider the AFP worth a 10-bit pole and the lowly soldiers will have to pay with their lives," Barzaga said.

The Department of National Defense has ordered an investigation of the purchase of 97,257 pairs of combat boots from Filipino Manufacturing Corp. after Jocdan Corsage Industries complained about alleged irregularities in the bidding process.

Jocdan offered the lowest bid at P995.50 per pair, while Filboot submitted the highest bid at P1,047.

President Macapagal-Arroyo wants a speedy investigation of the alleged anomalies in the awarding of the contract.

"I have already ordered an investigation on this matter and I expect the DND-AFP to address this and all other corruptions in our military with dispatch," the President said in a statement.

"Those found culpable must be prosecuted against in the proper court and elected with utmost sanctions under the regulations and standards of the command," she said.

Her spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the President also wanted to know the details of a well-entrenched cartel scrutinizing juicy contracts for military supplies.

Retired Navy Chief of Staff Gen. Hilarion Abaya has admitted that such a cartel has been operating in the military and defense establishment for decades.

Panelists and law clerks, Harmonia Bacani, president of Bacani Corp., have filed two cases against military officers for what they call anomalous transactions involving the supply of 106-mm howitzer shells worth P66 million and rocket propelled grenades worth P40 million.

Despite the recent price increase, Lara submitted and met the technological requirements

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2004

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Tropical depression will maintain cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Moderate, rough to very rough seas in areas with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Second FRONTPAGE

House employees fail lie test

Result of polygraph exam on Senate worker inconclusive

By Leila B. Salaverria

THREE of the five employees of the House of Representatives who were summoned to shed light on the discovery of fake election documents in the Batasan building failed the polygraph test administered by the National Bureau of Investigation.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco declined to identify the three employees, describing them only as support staff who found an envelope containing fake certificates of canvass (CoCs) and statements of votes (SoVs) in the Batasan lobby on June 7.

"The three were found positive for deception, that's the technical term," Wycoco told reporters yesterday. "But the polygraph is just an investigative tool. It needs to be confirmed by other facts."

Wycoco said the NBI would continue with its probe of the fake documents in order to get at those behind it.

The house employees who underwent the polygraph test on Friday were asked a series of questions that were relevant and irrelevant to the case. The latter questions were designed to put the subjects at ease in order to be able to compare their reactions to the relevant questions.

Wycoco said that one of the questions one of the employees failed to answer truthfully, according to the polygraph machine, was whether he knew who had placed the envelope containing the fake documents in the Batasan lobby. The employee had answered no.

Another question that another of the employees also failed asked if he was the one who had left the envelope in the lobby. He had also answered no.

Special Task Force chief Marian Inc Nagandman said yesterday 13 other employees of the House have been asked to report to the NBI on Wednesday for polygraph tests.

Aside from House employees, workers at the hotels are also being investigated after false election documents were also found in their buildings in Pasay City last May 17.

Wycoco said that Isabel Marquez, the janitress suspected of planting the bogus documents in a Hilda Teves restroom in the Senate building, had been subjected to a polygraph test but the results were inconclusive. He said Marquez would be summoned to the NBI again for a retest.

She would also be asked to clarify discrepancies in her statement, Wycoco said, like her claim that she had retrieved the envelopes in exclusive security answers with timers in the hallway shortly after she had spent only seconds in the toilet.

Marquez would also be asked to explain her claim that the sheaf of papers she was seen to retrieve contained, into the restroom, which she said was a tabloid newspaper, had come from the fifth floor lobby.

But Wycoco said the video footage showed that Marquez already had the papers in hand when she emerged from the adjacent Angara's office into the lobby. Angara's office is reportedly one of those that Marquez cleans.

Senate security officer Jose Marasel, who found other fake election documents elsewhere in the Senate building, was also set to undergo a polygraph exam yesterday, but his (those) promotion shut up and his test was canceled.

Wycoco said the lie-test would also summon Elizabeth Jacinto, a member of Sen. Ibrahim Lacson's staff, who likewise found an envelope containing fake CoCs in the stairwell on the third floor of the Senate building. Jacinto had submitted her statement earlier.

Lacson ran for president in the May 10 polls but lost.

Wycoco said Jacinto should have no problem with appearing at the NBI if she had nothing to hide. Other Senate employees like Marquez, he added, had agreed to appear before investigators.

GMA's gratitude worth P22.5M to Iloilo town

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has rewarded Iloilo for the "overwhelming win" they gave her in last month's elections by giving Iloilo province's municipalities P22.5 million in community assistance and transferring the head office of the Department of Agrarian Reform from Quezon City to Iloilo City.

Ms Macapagal was in Iloilo City yesterday to administer the oath of office to newly-elected officials of Iloilo, Guimaras and Antique. She then proceeded to the municipality of Concepcion to hand out P22.5 million for various "falafi" projects.

The President probably thanked the people of Iloilo and Guimaras for giving her one of her biggest margins over Fernando Poe Jr.

"I thank all of you who love me, and I also love you. I am deeply inspired to render my greatest services here," she said at the oath-taking ceremony.

Earlier, 26 of Concepcion's 28 barangays were given P19.7 million for the construction of water systems, school buildings, day care and health centers, fruit bridges and pumphouses for inland residents.

Ms Macapagal said this was part of "our gigantic pro-poor program funded by the World Bank to the tune of half a billion pesos." The P500-million fund was for the "Kabuhilan (action to Relieve)pan," a comprehensive and integrated delivery of basic services for the whole country, which the President secured during her 2003 visit to the US.

Ms Macapagal also announced that the DAR would soon be holding office in Iloilo.

"Yesterday I consulted Senate President Franklin Drilon ... In the interest of spreading or developing the power of the national government to the different regions, I shall be directing the Department of Agrarian Reform to transfer its head office here in Iloilo City," she said.

The President earlier ordered the Department of Agriculture to transfer its head office to Mindoro.

Weeks after the election, Ms Macapagal has also gone to Cebu to personally thank the citizens who reportedly gave her a commanding margin of over one million votes. She presided over a P500-million reclamation project in Cebu.

Meanwhile, Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye defended Ms Macapagal's act of rewarding to new officials even if she had not been proclaimed by Congress. He said there was no impropriety because she was still the President.

KISSED A SPOT
President Macapagal helps paint one of the houses for poor residents of Leong, Concepcion, Iloilo, under the Gawad Kalinga project, during her visit yesterday.

FPJ supporters file raps vs cops, others

By Armand N. Nocum and TJ Burgonio

SUPPORTERS of presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday filed graft charges against National Capital Region police chief Gen. Rizordo de Leon and other officials for the alleged illegal dispersal of their protest rally at the Quezon Memorial Circle on June 9.

In a six-page complaint, officials of the Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice (UMDJ) and the National Coordinating Center for Volunteers (NCCV) said their agary from anti-grafi cases, the police and military officials also violated laws against the disturbance of peaceful assemblies, physical injuries and grave coercion.

Apart from De Leon, the respondents were Chief Supt. Napoleon Castro, reelected Quezon City Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista and other unnamed persons.

The complainants included the UMDJ's Sal Estimagio, Cecile A. Talingin and Jerome Bonta.

In their complaint, the UMDJ officials said the dispersal was illegal because NCCP head, actor Eric Cortes, had secured a permit to rally at the Quezon Memorial Park after paying the P1,2,500 fee.

In a statement, the UMDJ said police and military men "violently assaulted the marchers with truncheons, shields, rifles and other such objects" without warning or negotiation.

They claimed that one of their members, Danilo Rodriguez, was dragged by the hair and beaten up by the authorities after he fell on the pavement. He was also reportedly detained and interrogated for 13 hours without the benefit of counsel. He was eventually released and no charges were filed against him.

The UMDJ was protesting alleged fraud and other forms of cheating in the canvassing of votes for president and vice president in Congress.

"We are not cowed by the instruments of repression unleashed by the Macapagal government to silence our protests and protests in the face of rampant electoral anomalies," the UMDJ said.

About 10,000 DJ members staged a short rally at the Ombudsman's office yesterday morning.

Meanwhile, the Philippine National Police yesterday denied fears that rallies by supporters of Poe would snowball into an uprising if the congressional canvass drags on this week.

Why Poe lawyer disappeared

By Carlito Pablo

IF "DR. GREP" of Fernando Poe Jr. is missing, the legal services of Homobono Adasa in the election canvassing being conducted by Congress. Shame it on Senators Edgardo Angara and Rodolfo Biazon (U.P.).

"I was already engaged by JFE but Angara and Pimentel had (my services) withdrawn," Adasa said. "They want to be the stars of the show and I just might steal the thunder from them."

Pimentel denied Adasa's claim. "I haven't talked with PFF regarding Bimbo Adasa at all in my entire life," the senator said in a text message, adding: "Why don't you ask FPJ?"

As of 5 p.m. yesterday, Angara had not responded to the lawyer's request for comment.

Adasa will always be remembered as the opposition lawyer who adamantly single-handedly caused the placing of asterisks on (questioned) certificates of canvass during the tabulation of the 1986 snap presidential elections presided over by the erstwhile dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The one honest but proclaimed strongman Ferdinand Marcos as the winner of the election but the opposition declared challenger Corazon Aquino President.

Those events eventually led to the Edsa People Power revolt in February 1986.

In an interview, Adasa said he was appointed by the in the fourth week of May as one of his two lead counsels, the other being Harriet Demetriou.

"I have a letter of appointment signed by FPJ," he said. "But a day after I got it, I was informed that Angara and Pimentel had blocked my appointment."

But Adasa has been on Ilocos (sweep) for Poe.

"It's a good decision. Had it pushed through, those people (Angara and Pimentel) would not fight for him (Poe) anymore," he said.

Meanwhile, Adasa remains a consultant to Poe. "I could hire lawyers," he said.

Adasa is also the legal counsel of the 66 spouses for Peace, Justice and Progress Movement, which is led by assistant Poe supporter Bienvenido Calderon.

'Pinoys must improve English skills'

By Jovanie Aning

IMPROVE your English and invest more in education.

This was the advice of the United States' top diplomat in the Philippines to entice for the country to strengthen its economy and create more opportunities for its young people.

Speaking at the Innovation Incubation Resource Center at the Ateneo de Davao last week, US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli pointed out that the Philippines has an "unidentified resource—the English language which, he said, is the language of international business.

"It is important that the Philippines maintains that asset by continuing to invest in and improve its English language education," he said.

Enemies

The diplomat pointed out that when he last lived in the Philippines 20 years ago, English "was more pervasive and far better spoken than it is today."

"There has been erosion of this precious commodity and that has been detrimental to the Philippines in competing against other countries in this region," Mussomeli said.

He even also pointed out that statistics showed the Philippines' expenditures on education per student had not kept up with its neighbors.

"This is troubling since, as with learning the English language, other educational skills are an important investment in your future," he said.

Shared burden

Mussomeli, however, said the national government should not bear the sole burden of financing public education.

Parents, students, teachers, politicians and employers share a mutual interest in promoting quality education, he said.

The diplomat said the US Embassy has often been working hand-in-hand with Filipinos to improve education in the country, particularly in Mindanao.

By providing assistance where the need is greatest, "we aim to strengthen our communities, help promote healing, and ultimately support sustainable peace in the Philippines," he said.

Mussomeli also cited of the "power" of education by recounting how the Thomasites, the first American teachers to journey to the Philippines in 1901, helped establish the country's modern public school system.

"Every time a soldier or the Marines are deployed, the determination of Americans grows and control of the Philippines into perpetuated. It was inevitable that once my choice to allow, indeed to support, education in the Philippines that we could not long remain in control of these islands," he said.

Pinoy killed in Iraq blast

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chanted scripts in a frantic speech, oddly reticent and lone bodies scrambling about on the ground. Not blast on human tissue, a major commercial thoroughfare lined with restaurants, shops and tourists.

A convoy consisting of vans Mr. Rodel Nuevo was riding in, a Mitsubishi and a GMC sped down the street, not far from the main headquarters of the coalition across the Tigris, when the explosion occurred at 9:35 a.m. (GMT 5:35 a.m.).

Suicide bomber

Maj. Mohammed Saleh, the top policeman at the scene, said: "It was a three-car American convoy. It came out [of] number 14 a small Volkswagen Brazilia [sic] between the cars and blew [himself] up," Saleh said.

"We were at first a suicide bombing," said Sgt. Jarrod Hlavaty, who witnessed the attack.

Other witnesses said they thought a parked car was detonated by remote control as the convoy passed by, but there was no independent confirmation.

Khaisar said the sports utility vehicles destroyed looked like the cars used by the US-run Coalition Provisional Authority, which employs thousands of contractors from many nations. Some of these contractors are involved in reconstruction projects, others in security work.

The blast blew out one of the wide, dirt-lit the road and onto a central grass square where it lay burning.

U.S. Army Lt. Joseph Lyons Jr. hosted overheard an ambulance crew needed, after the heavy percussions of the blast muffled the cop.

Later in the morning, four tanks and at least 30 military Humvees rumbled up to the area of the attack. American soldiers equipped with riot shields ousted all the area.

The front of one building was destroyed and injured people may, period out of the devastated area. Wounded Iraqis loaned on stretchers as they hobbled out of the collapsed building.

Saad Jassim Mohammed, 34, who was eating in a restaurant when the attack struck, said: "I rushed up to the building and I took out six dead bodies and I took out two people who were alive."

Wave of bombings

Since the new Iraqi caretaker government was unveiled on June 1, there has been a wave of car bombings and assassinations of government officials.

At least seven people were killed and 23 wounded in a suicide bombing here Sunday. An Iraqi education ministry official and a geography professor were gunned down in Baghdad on the same day, less than 24 hours after the country's deputy foreign minister was assassinated.

Last month, a suicide bombing killed 5 people dailies, the head of Iraqi now-dissolved Governing Council, and another council member survived an ambush south of the capital.

US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said the attacks were an attempt "to drain the will of the new interim government" in the run up to the June 30 handover.

"We know that the period leading up to sovereignty and indeed the period immediately after sovereignty is likely to be one in which the terrorists and the Saddam loyalists enhance their efforts at violence," Rice said.

Shedd, Ghazi Al-Nuaa, president of Iraq's interim government, also warned in an interview with NBC television of a "terrible" time ahead before sovereignty could be restored.

"It's going to be terrible for a while," Nuaa said the UN network's "Meet The Press" program.

AFP/Reuters

Opposition readies 2nd SC case to stop canvassing

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there was still no sign of the opposition leader or the court.

The court had thrown out by a unanimous vote an earlier petition asking the tribunal to declare the creation of the canvassing committee unconstitutional.

In a June 13 memorandum to the committee, Pimentel argued that the vote on the indefinite adjournment of Congress last week had rendered the legislature's "interim effect," or without any function and authority.

He reiterated arguments by administration lawmakers that the committee could still continue tabulating the votes because Congress had adjourned only as a legislative body, without going up to perform its canvassing duties.

Pimentel contended that Article VII of the Constitution "limits the power of Congress to continue to session indefinitely."

"It says that, while Congress may determine the number of days of its session, it may not continue to hold one more beyond 30 days prior to the opening of the next regular session, minus holidays, Sundays and legal holidays," he said.

Pimentel said the next regular session would fall on July 26, and 30 days before that would be June 14.

"Thus being the case, the 12th Congress is, for all intents and purposes dead, having killed itself—a suicide—by its own hand when the Senate President and the Speaker separately banged the gavel to adjourn sine die on June 11," Pimentel said.

Special session?

Pimentel suggested that President Macapagal-Arroyo call the outgoing Congress to a special session "on the assumption that the President can reconvene it into the dead the 12th Congress."

If the 12th Congress could not be legally resurrected, "the next best thing is to let the incoming 13th Congress do the job," the senator said.

"To this scenario, the Senate President interposes strong presidents' until the present a president[, as provided] for in the Constitution."

Minority Senate Rep. Eduardo Antonio Nachura said Ms Macapagal could call a special session because the 12th Congress would continue to exist until June 30.

'Continuing power'

But Nachura said that would be "superfluous" because Congress' members "continuing power" already spelled out in the Constitution.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, on the other hand, said Congress exercised "continuing power" and could not be deprived of its functions to canvass by the adjournment of the legislature.

"We continue to have power until June 30," he says said.

Senate City Rep. Prospero Nograles said the committee could not discuss the issue because it was a matter for the joint session of Congress to decide.

Nograles moved for the committee to proceed with the canvass without considering the issue.

Locsin's view

But Makati City Rep. Teodoro Locsin warned that the committee ran the risk of engaging in an "exercise" in futility, and suggested that Ms Macapagal call a special session to be on the "safe side."

The debate ended when committee members approved a motion for the panel to proceed with its canvass pending the decision of a "competent authority" on the issue—presumably the Supreme Court.

The motion was endorsed by House Rep. Salacnib Baterina.

Canvassing board still lives

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan stressed that Congress "is functus officio only as a canvassing body and not as a legislative body."

"The adjournment does not affect the life of the canvassing board," Pangilinan stressed.

He recalled that in the 1992 and 1998 elections, Congress first adjourned sine die, then convoked as a national canvassing board.

"It's wasteful to issue that, it should not be an issue now, spoken political, rather than constitutional and legal considerations. I think it is necessary for some to raise the issue at this time," Pangilinan said.

"It is time to set aside partisan politics and reconsider what is best for the nation."

To Maliczabing, a no-conclusion scenario was simply unthinkable.

"We are very optimistic that a 'no proclamation' scenario will not happen," said Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, when asked point-blank if the President would step down assuming no winner was proclaimed when the term expired on June 30.

Bunye said Malacañang was banking on the assurances given by the Senate and House leaderships that it would complete the canvassing before that date.

"The people believe that there will be a proclamation and we think that that will be done before June 30," said Bunye.

Asked if the President was open to calling a special session of Congress to settle the controversy, he said: "We will study all options, especially those suggestions coming from objective legal luminaries on this particular subject. We're considering, we're looking at all options."

"I do not want to speculate, we're just hoping for the best," Bunye said. With reports from Ed C. Cabacungan Jr. and Juliet Labog-Javellana

Canvassing leaders won't open bags of vote tallies

From page A1

from 3,464 out of 3,491 precints in the province and would be willing to submit them as evidence.

"We have all the documents, all the ERs in critical provinces. We have several several anomalies," he said.

But Gonzales and Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, the presiding officers, said marking all of the ERs would take time.

Also, the evidence of fraud should be presented before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, not the committee, they said.

Suppressing evidence?

Makati City Rep. Teodoro Locsin is shocked at the chair.

"The mandate of the joint panel is precisely to canvass the certificate of votes," Locsin said. "There is nothing in the Constitution or in the law that says the canvassing includes suppression of evidence."

"There is no effort to suppress evidence," Pangilinan retorted.

Sensing the possible defeat of the opposition inspired to submit its evidence, Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr. of Nacionalista Party Sen. Loi Legarda asked to be reorganized, even if she was not a committee member.

Legarda pointed out that the SofT by municipality to Batobo contained an entry of 10,220 for her rival, Sen. Noli de Castro, apparently because of the "misjoinked" figure of 1,786. It showed her vote to be 2,891.

But she argued that the SofT did not jibe with the precinct tallies, which she said showed her landside any figure of 16,200 for De Castro.

"Since there is doubt as to the veracity of the votes stated in the SofT by master, public and in the SoV by precinct, executive must be had in the election returns," Legarda said.

Sen. Ed Lozada town, she said, one precinct fully indicated that De Castro got zero while she got 122 votes.

But the original figures were erased out, and substituted with 1522 votes for De Castro and 50 for her, she alleged. She said that the erasures were not signed and countersigned by the board of canvassers.

Pangilinan, however, ruled that the COC copy of Congress did not have any erasure, as well as those of the administration bets in Makati, Valenzuela and Quezon City, Bagbalabang Pilipinas. As such, he said, the canvassing should proceed.

Lozada protested.

When Legarda cited as interests, Pangilinan reminded her that she had no standing to intervene in the canvassing because she had already said her piece.

"I wish you would not say so," retorts Legarda said.

"We're not gagging you," Pangilinan snapped back, and suspended the session for 15 minutes.

When session resumed, Enrique del Rosario, Pimentel's brother, insisted that there was no necessity in the balloting to bring erasures, only exceptional entries.

Making light of the exchange between Legarda and Pangilinan, Sen. Edgardo Angara reminded him not to bring the quarrel locally as this could be dangerous.

Angara's comments provoked laughter.

When the CoC from Surigao del Norte was finally tallied, President Macapagal-Arroyo was declared the presidential race with 1,141,095 votes or against 981,192 votes for Poe.

For vice president, De Castro had 1,137,298 votes while Legarda had 944,602.

Opposition strategy

Committee Vice Rep. Rolando Andaya said Pangilinan was correct in ignoring all other election documents, except the CoC.

Andaya said the opposition's strategy was to object only for the deliberation of the twenty CoC which showed Poe and Legarda losing.

"We are here to canvass using the CoC. But instead of the CoC, the opposition wanted to use the SoV. You are comparing apples and oranges," Andaya said.

The opposition's candidates, who noted "glaring discrepancies" in figures between the SoV and the CoC.

The lawyer of evangelist Eddie Villanueva said that in Sta. Ana's town alone, the 113 figure representing the votes of the President became 4,713, with the figures 4 and 0 suspected tampered.

In San Francisco town, the votes tally in a precinct showed the President's votes of 30 allegedly changed to 90, and still another was supposedly altered from 1 to 40.

"Now we have the evidence. That involves thousands of votes. And today is it that a particular candidate, in this case the President, would be increasing her votes by the thousands?" the lawyer asked.

Other lawyers noted the absence of specimen signatures in the SoV last May 14. Manuel Quezon, counsel for Sen. Nene Pimentel, said there was no specific proof of alteration in the principal documents.

Opposition lawyers also questioned the lack of signatures in the SoVs from some town officials in Maguindanao.

Again, their motions to defer the counts were defeated.

Tallies of the first Poe-Go for the day showed the President leading the presidential race with 1,225,378 votes as against 1,081,824 votes for Poe.

For third was Sen. Panfilo Lacson with 214,686, Villanueva, 201,941, and former Sen. Raul Roco, 154,106.

De Castro, on the other hand, had 1,140,742 votes, while Legarda had 1,068,180.

Turning the other closer was the order of the day for Ms Macapagal, but not before she opened out sharp words to her opponents.

Speaking at an oath-taking ceremony for local officials in Iloilo City, the President said the Municipal reading for the day was timely. With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana

More AFP supply 'irregularities' bared

Corrections

ON PAGE A1 in the two-star and three-star editions of Friday's issue, the name of a major port in Western Mindanao was misspelled in the headline of a story about the arrest of a suspected terrorist. The correct spelling is "Zamboanga," not "Zamboanga."

* * *

ON PAGE D3 of Sunday's issue, an article in Sunday Lifestyle misstated the location of Pico de Loro without solid rock cliff is a favorite of mountaineers and rock climbers. The article should have referred to "terrace, Cavite, and boangles, [terrace] [sic] not in Nasi, Cavite.

* * *

IN TELEVISION'S issue, a front page story — "Ads news for De Posters?" — misspelled the nickname of Bishop Efraim Agapito Aquino. The correct spelling is "Bais," not "Batch."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections or clarifications in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati Avenue, Makati City; fax this to 897-4703; or e-mail at dyrio@philnet.inquirer.com.ph and dayrio@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Pangalangan, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address opinion@inquirer.com.ph.

From page A1

ry of its products, Bersales said officers of the AFP logistics command and of the bidding committee rejected the offer because "they won't be able to make money from us."

She said there was an apparent "collusion" between suppliers and the procurement committee.

Last year, she and her father filed a case with the Office of the Ombudsman against six officers of the AFP Logistics Center when a contract they won that year to deliver the shells failed to materialize.

Old ammo

The loss said the contract was eventually given to a supplier who came up with old ammunition, whose fuses were unusable and did not meet the AFP's own technical specifications.

The price was also greatly disadvantageous to the government, they said.

"If you put in the wrong kind of ammunition, you have hundreds casualties because your troops cannot [they might explode prematurely and kill soldiers]," Bersales said.

She said the 105-mm shell ammunition was scrapped and the funds redirected by the AFP top brass for the acquisition of other equipment after the contractor broke out.

The military, nevertheless, still needs the shells for its artillery units, according to the Bersales executive.

She said that to this day, her company is capable of supplying the best kind of shells at the best price. "That does not negate that there was some irregularity committed. That is why I am pursuing the case," she said.

Disqualified

Bersales said her company was unconscionably disqualified from bidding for the tender in spite of its winning bid.

The bidding for the RPGs was also questioned as failure after the last one was, as the government did not meet the technical specifications.

The acquisition of the RPGs has since been referred to the Department of Budget and Management, which now handles the military's procurement system following the find-wood mess last year.

Among the complainers of the most recent mess were those suspected procurement officials in the AFP and Malacañang's trade combat boots.

She had already sent letters to Malacañang, Senate, Department of Defense and top officials of the AFP.

Malacañang

In response to her company's letter, Bersales said Malacañang was keenly watching her remarks. "We believe this action the very core of a strong republic. The kind of system reflects badly on the soldiers, who make up the bulk of the military, and their families."

She said over the fact that she and her father had not received a response from them.

But she and her father are comforted by the fact that they have now gotten the ear of retired Lt. Gen. Edgardo Abintajo, the defense undersecretary for the newly formed Department.

At a press conference yesterday in Camp Aguinaldo, where anti-questions surrounding the deal for hammer shells had been addressed.

He added that he had not come across any other anomalies in the past concerning military supplies. "I am now testing those procurements and if there are any anomalies, it means that those can be tightened."

Abintajo stressed that he would not rest on any anomalous transactions in the AFP.

Bersales challenged Abintajo to hold a forum for "honest bidders" to be able to air out their grievances "if he is really serious about changing the system."

She said there were still officers who wanted reforms in the AFP "Even however officers refuse to cooperate for fear of being corrupted. They shy away because they are afraid of becoming victims themselves."

Gagged

The Office of Legal Affairs of the Department of Defense had been gagged by the military leadership in an attempt to whitewash the probe of the deal for combat boots, according to Jodeer.

Jodeer said: manager Peter Gi Cheng told the bayonne that lawyer Norman Dumpit had been ordered by the OSG to "shut up."

It was Dumpit who disclosed that the legal affairs had received a formal complaint from Jodeer last May 12.

Dumpit confirmed that the legal affairs had been looking into the matter on orders of Bayonga.

Abintajo or Jocelyn denied authorizing any investigation, saying "nobody is authorized to investigate."

He also insisted that there was no irregularity in the bidding for the boots. He, however, surprisingly admitted that a control bushed by "friends in the military" had been conducting comments for military equipment for the police.

Cheng found it strange that Bayonga issued some conflicting statements.

"He is already prejudging the case and preempting the investigation. How can you expect the legal affairs to proceed with the investigation fairly?"

The bayonne said but failed to contact Dumpit yesterday.

The military insisted yesterday that the deal for the combat boots was absolutely legal and that the complaint filed by Jodeer was frivolous for 25 failure. With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

DENR to monitor water quality of 57 beaches

By Norman Bordadora

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources will test the water quality of the country's most popular beaches to ensure these are safe for tourists.

A total of 57 major beaches will be monitored by the DENR this year under its Beach Environment Watch program. These include top tourist destinations like Puerto Azul in Ternate, Cavite; Subic in Zambales; Puerto Galera in Oriental Mindoro; Dakak in Zamboanga del Norte; and Samal Island in Davao Gulf.

"We will be enlisting travel owners on the current state of their beaches. This will help them identify and institute mechanisms to improve the quality of the water and prevent the deterioration of the area," said Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun.

Gozun said the the Beach Environment Watch program aims to generate information on the quality of the country's major beaches. The data gathered would help improve the quality of service these resorts provide to local and foreign tourists.

"This is an effort to safeguard the health of tourists by making sure that the water in our beaches is not contaminated with bacteria that would cause outbreaks of water-borne diseases," she said.

In 2003, the Environment Management Bureau monitored 13 beaches on the issue to land for total and fecal coliform counts.

Based on their data, all stations passed the criteria used for bathing beaches which is 1000 MPN/100 ml (most probable number of bacteria per 100 ml of water) for total coliform and 200 MPN/100 ml for fecal coliform.

Some of the beaches that were monitored are Pebo Shell Beach 1 and 1A, Oslo Dendy Resort 2 and 2A, Pebo D Beach 2 and 3A, Boni Station 7, 7A, 2 and 5, and Villa Ong Beach 1 and 1A.

Recently, a three-day International Workshop on Coasts for Beaches Program in the Philippines was conducted on Boracay Island.

The seminar was jointly sponsored by the DENR, World Bank, Bank-Netherlands Water Partnership Program and EE-Asia Environment Facility.

World Bank officials said that Boracay is land may opt to join the Blue Flag campaign, an international eco-labelling program for beaches and marinas all over the world.

Under the Blue Flag campaign, beaches are gauged on water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, safety and services.

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RP urges nations to ratify UN treaty

By Jeremie Aning

PHILIPPINE Permanent Representative to the United Nations Lauro Baja Jr. has reiterated the world body's call for all countries to ratify immediately a treaty protecting UN and associated personnel from violent attacks.

Baja made the call in his speech during ceremonies marking UN Staff Day on Friday (Saturday in Manila) at UN headquarters in New York.

At this month's presidency of the Security Council, Baja joined UN officials and other diplomats in paying tribute to the 111 UN personnel who died in the past year since the last Staff Day.

The commemoration ended with the solemn reading of the names of all those UN workers—both military and civilian.

Among those in the ceremony was Filipino UN staff member Marilyn Manuel, who recounted how she survived last year's one-ton assault on the UN office in Baghdad, Iraq.

Manuel was originally listed among the dead. Killed in that incident was the top UN envoy to Iraq, Brazilian diplomat Sergio Vieira de Mello, and 21 staff members.

Manuel, a veteran of UN missions in Somalia, Liberia and East Timor, offered a personal glimpse of the horrors of being deliberately targeted as a UN staffer.

She told how she was "walked in blood" after the bombing and was only able to call her family in the Philippines using a borrowed cell phone.

Manuel issued a strong call for preventive steps against the violence: "All security measures must be taken before staff are deployed in the field," she stressed.

Baja said the UN staff members who died for the cause of peace left behind a lasting legacy.

"Their passing will inspire us to carry with fervor resolve and renewed vigor the work that translates the spirit of the UN Charter into reality—by keeping the peace, feeding the hungry, giving shelter to the stateless, caring for the sick, educating the illiterate and enabling the impoverished to lift themselves to rebuilding their nations and their economies in conflict-stricken parts of the world," he said.

In calling for the immediate ratification of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Baja took note of Secretary General Kofi Annan's report to the General Assembly that showed that only one-third of UN member-countries had ratified the treaty which was concluded 10 years ago.

"To enhance its protective regime, this 1994 convention should become a universal international instrument at the earliest possible time," the ambassador said.

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RP gets another UN post

THE COUNTRY has garnered another feather in its cap.

The Philippines was named vice chair of an important United Nations Security Council committee which would oversee implementation of the resolution that would make it difficult for terrorist groups to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

Ambassador Lauro Baja Jr., Philippine permanent representative to the UN and current Security Council president, said council members agreed to constitute the committee during closed door consultation on Friday.

The Philippines convened the meeting upon the request of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus of the council. NAM is an organization of 144 mostly developing countries, including the Philippines.

Romania was named chair of the new body dubbed "Committee 1540," in the resolution which the Philippines co-sponsored and which the council adopted unanimously on April 28.

Baja said the Philippines had rather declined the suggestion of the NAM caucus and China to chair the committee. He stressed, however, that the Philippines was committed to the committee's immediate construction.

The resolution was the first to be co-sponsored by the Philippines since it assumed its seat in the Security Council. It requires all states to pass laws and adopt measures that would prevent the transfer of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons for use in terrorism. It mandates the establishment of a committee to report on the status of the implementations of the resolutions, particularly on the compliance of member-states with its provisions.

Baja said the agreement among council members to name the Philippines vice chair of the committee was in recognition of the country's role in helping successfully push the resolution. He also pointed out Manila's serious policy in pursuing the fight against international terrorism. —Jeremie Aning

211 soldiers, cops killed during campaign

By TJ Burgonio

MANILA—It can be told: There were more casualties on the government's side than on the part of the rebels during clashes in the six months since election season.

At least 140 soldiers have been killed and 611 policemen were killed in the period Jan. 15, 2004 to June 9 this year, Chief Supt. Joel Goltiano, national police chief information officer, told reporters yesterday.

In contrast, only 41 New People's Army rebels were killed, he added.

Based on figures from around the country, there were at least 269 violent incidents, 128 of which were initiated by the rebels and the rest by the government.

Goltiano was quick to point out that at least 204 other guerrillas were "neutralized" in the same period—46 rebels were wounded, 67 arrested, 139 surrendered, and 19 captured.

He added that the Tuesday night attack by a group of 25 rebels to ignite a disturbance in Bacolodon, Marawi, was just that unsuccessful. The incident left two policemen dead.

"The NPA is continuing its current security operations," Goltiano said.

The families of the slain police officers Roberto Abesamis and Ludovi Gonzalez would receive benefits from the national headquarters. Whether they would receive pensions is still up to the respective districts.

In a related development, officials disagreed reports that the NPA has deployed hit squads in Metro Manila targeting National Security Adviser Roilberto Gonzales and Commission on Elections chief Benjamin Abalos Jr.

Ricardo de Leon, director of the National Capital Region Police Office, said they have received intelligence reports, but they have yet to be validated.

Nevertheless, police have beefed up security for Abalos and Gonzales as a precautionary measure.

Director Avelino Razon, national police director for operations, said the national headquarters has not received any information on such reports, but added that the man a "possibility" that authorities should check out.

Dismissed college prexy wins case vs QC school

THE NATIONAL Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) has declared as illegal the dismissal of Dr. Orlando Molina as president of Trinity College of Quezon City (TCQC) two years ago and ordered the school to pay him moral and exemplary damages.

The NLRC decision was released in September 2003 but the school submitted its motion appealing the case. The NLRC, through Commissioner Angelina Gutierrez, said the school failed to comply with the bond requirement to perfect the appeal hence the decision "has become final and executory, and therefore irrevocable."

The NLRC ordered the TCQC to pay Molina full back wages and benefits without qualification or deduction from the time of his dismissal until promulgation of the decision including moral damages and exemplary damages.

In November 2001, TCQC charged Molina with a string of alleged offenses ranging from use of school vehicles and drivers for personal purposes to signing a construction contract without observing school SOPs.

Labor arbiter Felix Arguelles Jr. said the respondents are only liable to submit clear charges for size encroached on Molina's duties as the school's president and CEO.

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Greco

ROMANIAN WOMAN votes in European elections June 13 in Raja village near Lake Pogoi where the population voted against the long-time ruling Social Democrats. —AFP

EU voters punish gov'ts for Iraq, economic ills

BRUSSELS—Europe's voters have delivered a massive vote of no confidence in their governments in European Parliament elections, both by hammering ruling parties and by staying away in record numbers.

The biggest transnational elections in history staged just six weeks after the European Union expanded from 15 to 25 states with 450 million citizens, highlighted public indifference to match record EU nonturnout.

Based on 16 partial votes, election projections showed Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair, hit by risk in the US-led Iraq war, and the governing parties in France, Germany and Poland for economic stagnation, high unemployment and painful social reforms.

Only the recently elected Spanish and Greek governments escaped the voters' wrath, amplifying their national victories.

A mere 44.2 percent of nearly 350 million eligible voters bothered to cast ballots in the four-day exercise, the lowest turnout since direct elections for the then-fledgling Assembly began in 1979.

In an array of history, voter participation was even weaker in the 10 new, mainly ex-communist and European member states, where a averaged just 26 percent, apparently due to some budget-carrier citizens' "don't vote" cue on joining the EU.

"Today's results, up to now, appear to be the worst," outgoing parliament president Pat Cox said, lamenting the turnout dropped to one of the debacle. "Europe has lowered its democratic temperature."

In Britain and Poland, last-Blair Euroskeptics made stunning gains, sending strident new cries of hostility to European integration to sit in the increasingly powerful EU legislature.

The UK Independence Party, which sees its fine-three seats in 1999, was on course to grab 15 this time, while Poland's populist League of Catholic Families beat the ruling Socialists into fourth place.

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's Social Democrats crashed to their worst result since World War Two while French President Jacques Chirac's center-right UMP party suffered its second electoral defeat in three months.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia party also lost ground, although it suffered a sudden anti-war backlash than either US allies in Britain, Denmark or Portugal.

The overall balance in parliament, which has growing powers over EU spending, financial regulation, food safety and environmental rules, was little changed.

The center-right European People's Party was set to remain the biggest group with 279 of the 732 seats, the Socialists were second with 199, the Liberals third with 67 and the Greens fourth with 42.

It was not immediately clear what alliances would be formed to run parliament.

Politicians said the Socialists and an augmented Liberal group that may be boosted by defectors from the center-right EPP were exploring a possible deal, although a return to the traditional power-sharing between EPP and Socialists which prevailed until 1999 was also possible.

Liberal leader Graham Watson said his faction could be in the position of "kingmakers."

As final results trickle in on Monday, attention will shift to last-ditch negotiations on a proposed EU constitution, due to be concluded at a summit in Brussels on Thursday and Friday, and to the search for a new European Commission president. Reuters

Southeast Asians seen happier than North Asians

SINGAPORE—Political uncertainty and economic weakness are making North Asians more stressed and unhappy than their more youthful counterparts in Southeast Asia, a survey released here Monday found.

Food and health supplements company Gardenia Pacific Limited said its survey of 4,700 people aged over 15 in China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Taiwan found Malaysians to be the happiest lot.

They were followed by Singaporeans and Thais, the Singapore-based company said in a statement.

Respondents from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong however expressed a high level of worry about meeting basic financial needs as well as the poor economy, unstable jobs and political instability.

Their distress was compounded by a lack of family support, Gardenia president and chief executive officer Oji Koke said.

"The people in East Asian countries have come to spend more than families. In North Asia, the family unit is getting smaller and they have less time to spend with their families," he said.

"To have more time with the family is the best way to reduce stress levels."

Singaporeans were the most optimistic about the future, with 1.0 percent feeling "excited" about the world and 65 percent saying they believed they would be as happy or even happier in the next five years, the survey results showed.

One in four of those in Singapore either expressed to be happier attributed their optimism to "positive thinking" and stated human relationships as the key driver of happiness.

Malaysians and Thais, on the other hand, said their optimism was due to expectations of economic and earning improvements as well as expansive outlook. AFP

Pakistan Army ends operation, leaves 72 dead

DERAMADA—Pakistani troops have ended a major operation to flush out al-Qaida suspects and their local supporters from a lawless region near Afghanistan, leaving 72 people dead, including 27 security personnel, an army spokesperson said Monday.

But even as the five-day operation ended in South Waziristan, two Pakistani soldiers and a driver were killed and four injured in Monday in the bombing of a vehicle carrying paramilitary forces in neighboring North Waziristan.

The operation was launched after foreign and army-led 11 security personnel near the town of Shakai, 300 km west of the capital Islamabad, last Wednesday, July. Gen. Shoaib of Pakistan said.

Army soldiers, backed by artillery helicopter gunships and jet fighters, targeted rebel hideouts. The operation left 50 militants dead, he said. Two more soldiers were killed during the action.

"The operation concluded Sunday evening," Sultan said.

He said all the slain militants were foreigners, but he declined to reveal their identities or nationalities.

The army also seized a huge cache of arms, including heavy weapons and ammunition.

A senior security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said some of those killed were Pakistanis and others were Arabs and Uzbek militants and confirm their links with al-Qaida.

The official said it was not clear if the dead men had links with leaders of the current network.

Pakistan's tribal region bordering Afghanistan considered a possible hideout for Osama bin Laden and his chief aide Ayman al-Zawahri.

The operation followed weeks of unsuccessful efforts to get hundreds of suspected al-Qaida and Taliban fighters said to be a mix of Arabs, Central Asians, Afghans and Uzbeks, to negotiate with authorities in the South Waziristan region.

Meanwhile, Sultan said Pakistani security forces on Sunday opened fire on some vehicles carrying Afghans when they crossed into Pakistan from Afghanistan, and eight of the attackers were reportedly killed.

"One security forces opened fire on three Afghan intruders when they violated our territory in South Waziristan," he said. "According to radio intercepts, eight of them were killed."

A three-car convoy then fled back to Afghanistan, leaving behind two vehicles.

Pakistan has deployed about 70,000 troops in its tribal regions to prevent Taliban and al-Qaida fugitives from sneaking into Pakistan after President Gen. Pervez Musharraf made the Islamic nation a key ally of the United States in its war on terror. AP

New Zealand may scrap birthright citizenship—Clark

WELLINGTON—New Zealand should reconsider its current policy of granting the right to national citizenship to anybody born here, Prime Minister Helen Clark said Monday.

"There has been a tendency in recent years not only to New Zealand but also to other developed countries for people to come under tourism permit and then have children in our country... for the purpose of citizenship," she said late-weekly press conference.

"We need to consider whether there needs to be a response to that."

Her comments came after speculation that planned legislative change would end the automatic right.

Earlier in the day Internal Affairs Minister George Hawkins told New Zealand will make it harder for migrants to obtain citizenship under a proposed new law.

Hawkins said a bill was being prepared to amend both the Citizenship Act and the Passports Act.

"The bill will increase the standard period of residence in New Zealand that applicants must meet, from three years to five years," he told Radio New Zealand.

In addition, time spent in New Zealand on temporary permits would no longer count as a period of residence for citizenship purposes.

He said the birth right citizenship issue was not being dealt with in the changes being planned now.

The United States is dealing with the issue of citizenship at birth and is based held a referendum which overwhelmingly supported revoking automatic citizenship.

Hawkins also said that from Zealand wants to see that new passports are withdrawn 10 years to bring a bid to stay ahead of counterfeiters.

Passports would no longer be issued for 10 years under newly proposed legislation because "counterfeiting techniques have become more and more sophisticated," he said. AFP/AP

SATURN MOON MAY HAVE WATER

Saturn's moon Pandora is shown in this photo released by Nasa June 13, taken by the Nasa spacecraft Cassini on June 11. Pandora is showing geologic evidence of an ice-rich body overlain with a thin layer of dark material. The change defined a view as cassini orbited over it most layers of alternating bright and dark material. —

US warns al-Qaida determined to carry out attacks in Saudi

WASHINGTON—The United States warned Sunday that al-Qaeda determination to stage attacks within Saudi despite a government threat to the kingdom and made the oil-rich nation a dangerous place for foreigners, after a week in which at least three more killed.

"Clearly, al-Qaida has been determined to try and carry out attacks in Saudi despite," national security adviser Condoleezza Rice told CBS.

"There is no doubt that this is an area in which al-Qaida is trying to make a mark. And we've been watching it very closely."

Senator US officials have voiced mounting concern about attacks against Westerners in Saudi Arabia, which have sharply escalated since early May.

"The Saudis know that this is no exercise that a coming after them. The killing of foreigners, whether they're Americans or Brits or what are they, is a direct attack against the Saudi regime," Secretary of State Colin Powell told NBC television.

The attacks by extremists have targeted individuals rather than military or industrial facilities, especially people linked to the oil industry.

The United States has already urged Americans to leave the country and allowed nonessential diplomatic staff and their families to return home. The US embassy in Riyadh Sunday again urged Americans to step up their security precautions, a day after suspected al-Qaida militants killed an American and abducted another.

An Islamist website claimed the killing and the kidnapping for al-Qaida, led by Saudi-born militant Osama bin Laden, which wants to "drive the Crusaders out of Arabia."

The Afghan events was identified as Paul M. Johnson Jr., while the US national killed in a drive-by shooting was named as Kenneth Scroggs.

"We know that one American was killed and one American kidnapped. I am waiting for final confirmation and notification of next of kin before confirming the names, but those names are out in the public now," Powell said.

"I don't have any additional information with respect to who is responsible for the killing of the five Americans and the location of the Americans who has been kidnapped."

US national Robert Jacob was shot dead Tuesday at his home in Riyadh. He worked for Vinnell Corp, which helps train the Saudi National Guard.

A videotape posted Sunday on a website attributed to al-Qaida shows what it claimed to be Jacob's murder.

Chanting, prodding dad, at body was, it stood in the background as the rape at two men are seen clanking a bloody machete-dressed man who screams: "Wait, wait! No, no!"

Seconds later some 30 gunshots ring out as the man falls to the ground.

The Saudis now know that there have a very serious problem within the kingdom, and they know that it's going to require all their resources, not only their military and police resources," Powell told CBS television.

"I am confident with what they have done so far. I think there's more that they can do." AFP

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ENTERTAINMENT
Editor Lourdes C. Custodio

Ai Ai : I've learned to live without a man

By Nini Valera

SINGER Miguel Vera would go to Ina en-with; to Ai-Ai for Ana, for financial help whenever towards it.

The comedienne herself revealed this during the premiere of her movie, "Valia," last week.

"He has no choice," Ai Ai said jokingly in Filipino. "But he doesn't do it on a regular basis."

Ai Ai and Miguel have been separated for seven years. They have three children. They were at odds with each other after they separated, but are now on good terms again.

But Ai Ai claimed she has learned that she could live without a man.

"Before, I would make my children an excuse for not leaving my husband," she said. "I thought that was the end reason. I did not want to break up with him coz I thought I needed him. Hindi pala."

She is now into a relationship, she revealed, but kept the other party's name a secret.

"That belongs only to me," she declared.

Higher income bracket

That Ai Ai, 40, belongs to the high-range income tax bracket is no secret to show biz. In 2003, she paid more than P2 million in taxes, making her the sixth highest taxpayer from show biz, according to a report published in the Inquirer last January.

The list has megastar Sharon Cuneta at the top after she paid more than P5.9 million in income taxes in 2002 to second place is Aga Muhlach, who paid more than P3 million, followed by singer Martin Nievera, who paid almost P3 million.

Ai Ai is expectedly going to clinch spot next year with her new assignments in ABS-CBN, the sitcom "Ang Tanging Ina, The Series" and her starring role in "BFF," Big Bert Marcelo.

"Malamang, meron ang naweste sa'kin," she agreed, "because of those two shows. But I have worked hard for everything that I have."

What she has is a legacy that she fought on her disposable income.

"Yes, Gladys (Reyes, the Jaguar," she said, her face deadpan, after heavens Entertainment told her that Sarah Jessica Parker bought Manolo Blahnik shoes out of her disposable income. But Ai Ai immediately dropped the stone face, which resembled into a guffaw and her trademark loudmouth delivery of lines.

SUPERWOMAN at home in a "santa-strip" room to her kids, says Ai Ai of her dramatic persona.

This is not forever

"What happened after that he came out," she said in Filipino, "was that it was easier for me to borrow money from the bank."

It was also easier for Ai Ai to obtain travel visas to foreign countries, but she refused to say how much she is worth today.

"Dinamba ka ba?" she asked, aping a wide-eyed wonder look.

But her children have total faith, she admitted, as well as pieces of property. "I have to prepare for the time when my career wanes," she said. "That is why I save. I know this is not forever."

Ai Ai, who has been open about undergoing liposuction procedure on her stomach, said she would have a boob lift soon even as she declared that she has low breasts enhanced.

"Kailangan ng lift," she said, pumping her breasts with her hands. "Like if I wear a backless dress, and the bra has a high bra line, ang pangit. Ang pinoob ang, mahil ko na ito para ma lift."

Diapers at home

Asked how far she would go for beauty, Ai Ai said liposuction would be her limit. But why does she bother when the unemployed comedian does not look on his looks, but on how his looks at lack of it has become staple comic fare?

"It makes me feel good," she said. "It gives me confidence."

So what's he Ai Ai like with only her children at her audience?

"I wear diapers at home, and mostly pajamas," she said. "Sometimes, it's comedy hour for 24 hours at home."

She cited as example: "I would ask my kid, o, where's my juice, while drinking juice. And he would tell me, 'o' Mama, nagpipiwee na naman. Eh, juice ko 'yung iniinom mo, e."

As remembered by Ai Ai, the child carrying his mother for drinking his juice was transformed into a wimp, trembling joke. With her wild hair colored almost blonde, her red lipstick and prominent chin, Ai Ai is the perfect comedienne. Even if she claimed she is an imperfect mother who borders on being "semi-strict."

But when it comes to her achievements as comedienne, Ai Ai has broken track records and has to break her own with "Valia," produced by Star Cinema and directed by Mario Bertolina.

"I am the first comedienne to star in a movie that registered the highest gross during its run," said Ai Ai, referring to her "Tanging Ina." Before her, only comedy movies which starred Dolphy broke box-office records.

She hopes to surpass herself by playing the super heroine role of Valia.

"CLICK!" AGAIN In Villaru (far left) was erroneously identified as Sheena Halili, and Bianca King (fourth from right) as Iya, in the "Chix Barkadahan!" photo in the article about Rainier Castillo (pantorama right) here last Sunday. Sheena is not in the picture.

Comeback for Visayan films?

BOHOL look now, but after many years of dormancy, Visayan movies may be on the verge of a comeback. The first indication we got recently was Grace Montaño's announcement that his next film, titled "Voda" (Visayan for "The River"), was holding auditions in Bohol.

Now, new movie maybe MLD Films has chosen for its first project a script titled "Tinday," written by Armando Lao and to be directed by Jeffrey Jetturian. The movie will be shot in Cebu and will showcase that province's scenic spots and festivals.

The production stars Aunor Hilona playing a tour guide and Ara Mina as a grade-school teacher. "Tinday" will be supported by some Cebuano actors. "Tinday" is slated for the Metro Manila Film Festival at the end of the year.

While it isn't clear if "Tinday" will have a lot of dialogue in Cebuano, it could help encourage producers in the south to kickstart their own projects.

After all, there are many Cebuano-speaking people all over the country, and Visayan films did enjoy over a decade of prosperity in the '50s and '60s.

With "Voda" and "Tinday" showing the way, those prospects may once again look up.

Incidentally, a full-length foreign movie has also been produced, yet another indication that interest in filmmaking in the south has been revived.

Feedback

FROM Romulo C. Cagnan of San Pedro, Laguna (excerpts): "Allow me to share my views regarding Peque Gallaga's 'Scorpio Nights,' which you described as a modern Filipino film classic.

"The film is gorgeously shot and tells a story of adultery that leads to a violent resolution. Its greatness depends largely upon its visual content and the cinematic state of it that conveys conduct realism characterized by meticulous depiction of detail.

"Ambient sounds and native camera feeling and mood. When Gallaga's film uses Bernstein-Gallaga's lay and breathing as an instrument to communicate

CONTINUED, A-11

Comeback for Visayan films?

to viewers. Lenny's [illegible] Fernando's new members of the times reveal their motivations changes.

"The reporter's line-by- fighting is foreboding, the color red creates drama/ atmosphere, and the clicking of the clock gives a sense of imminent danger.

"The film's skilful blending of cinematic elements ignites the passion and propels the tension of the actors, it establishes a psychological connection between the movie's characters and the viewers.

"While its commercial and critical success, this low-budget production can claim victory on several fronts: It beat the practice of casting big stars in principal roles in order to secure their popular appeal. Daniel Boncodin was a virtual unknown when he appeared in this movie.

"Just the film also proved that a small budget is not a hindrance in any other to produce a high-quality film."

'Acoustic Lokal 2'

ACOUSTIC music is popular these days, so it isn't surprising that even big singing stars are recording intimate arrangements of their signature hits. Vina Morales' "Superstars Acoustic Lokal 2" features Regine Velasquez's acoustic take on "Gabi Na," Sarah Geronimo with her new version of "Forever's Not Enough," and Gary Valenciano and Aiza Seguerra doing a duet of his composition, "Hawag Ka Lang Kumawala."

Other artists featured include Julius Wagdangui, Lani Misalucha, Formula, Hotdogs, Gary Valenciano and Ogie.

'Goldenrocker'

AT 8 p.m. on June 17, HBO screens "Rustic Pioneers to Goldenrocker," starring Mike Myers in multiple roles. Michael Caine plays Powers dad. Other famous actors and celebrities contribute droll cameo performances.

At 8:45 p.m. on June 17, the movie's cast and crew give a headsman on what it's like to be a part of this hilarious production in "HBO Inside Peak: meets Powers in Goldenrocker."

'Playday'

EVERY Thursday at 10 p.m., the Discovery Geographic Channel telecasts "Playday," a new nonfiction series that investigates high-profile air disasters to find out how and why they happened.

"Playday" takes viewers aboard the ill-fated flights in terrible with expertly-crafted dramatic reenactments based on transcripts from recovered flight data recorders. Other production elements used include news footage, animation graphics, accident investigation reports, and interviews with pilots, analysts and key witnesses.

NGAYONG GABI NA!
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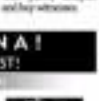
TONIGHT @ 6:30PM!

EATING OUT
by Q. Allan Brocka

Kyle, young gay & unlucky in love lives with Caleb who is married and STRAIGHT.

TOMORROW @ 6:30PM!
INTERMOTES
by Hamilton McLeod



Ian Hamilton camps it the classic world of gay men's internet chat. Official entry to the New York Gay & Lesbian Film Festival 2004.

TOMORROW @ 9PM!
V DEAD GAY GUYS
by Ky Wo Lab

Two kids and boys have a lot of dead old gay men as they search a legendary land of cash.

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ATC	G1	G4	GB3	ACC
11	1 SHREK 2	1 SHREK 2	1	1
2	2 HARRY POTTER & THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN	2	2	2
3 DAY AFTER TOMORROW	3 SHREK 2	3	3 SHREK 2	3
4		4	4	4
5		5 SHREK 2	5	5

GB1
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Bribery case against Sharon junked, says TV

JERUSALEM—Israel's attorney general has decided not to indict Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on bribery charges, television said on Sunday, dropping the most serious threat to the premier's career overshadowing his withdrawal plan from Gaza.

Israeli officials were not available for comment on the Channel Two report that Attorney General Menachem Mazuz had closed the case due to "lack of evidence against Sharon. Mazuz is expected to issue his formal decision next week.

Indictment would likely force Sharon from office and derail his strategy of "disengagement" from the Palestinians, which the Cabinet approved in principle last week in a vote that cut apart his pro-settler partners and triggered resignations.

But removal of the indictment threat would give Sharon a boost in wrapping all 21 Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and four of the 120 in the West Bank by the end of 2005—a move he casts as breaking a deadlock in 37 1/2 years of conflict.

The plan has popular backing in Israel. Sources in Sharon's office said on Sunday that dozens of settlers had asked for details of compensation for leaving their homes voluntarily.

The bribery case centers on payments of hundreds of thousands of dollars that an Israeli businessman says he had to have made to Sharon's son Gilad, hired in the late 1990s as an adviser on a (never-completed) project to build a Greek resort.

The developer, David Appel, was indicted in January on charges of trying to bribe Sharon, Israel's chief prosecutor has officially recommended indicting the prime minister as well.

Sharon also faces probes in two other corruption scandals.

An end to the so-called "Greek island affair" could ease the worry of the opposition Labor Party over government threats to throw up a coalition lifeline to Sharon if rebels from his Likud party quit the government, leaving it a majority in the 120-seat parliament.

A senior government official said last week Sharon was all but certain to bring in center-left Labor, a supporter of withdrawals from occupied land which has been reluctant to throw him a lifeline while the corruption scandal lingers on.

"The government... will eventually have to bring in Labor," the official said. But he declined to give a timetable.

If the disengagement plan is carried out, it would mark the first time Israel has removed settlements built in the West Bank and Gaza, which were occupied in the 1967 Middle East war.

The Palestinians would welcome any withdrawal from territories they want for a state, but regards the withdrawal plan as a ploy to cement Israel's hold on West Bank land. Reuters

SHARON

Koreas' navies in radio contact for first time

SEOUL—The South and North Korean navies established radio contact for the first time Monday in a major step toward easing tension on the Cold War's last frontier, officials said.

Warships from the two sides successfully communicated using a common radio frequency, flags and light signals along a disputed sea border in the Yellow Sea in an effort to prevent accidental clashes, navy officials said.

"Many ships from both sides have been in radio contact from 0900 GMT, sailing along the sea border off the west coast," a South Korean navy spokesperson said.

The unprecedented contact comes a day before the two Korean hold scores of joint events to mark the signing of a landmark rapprochement agreement at their summit in 2000.

The summit prompted a thaw between the North and South, but ties have been disrupted by naval skirmishes in the rich fishing grounds off the western coast.

Since 1999, dozens of casualties have been reported on both sides. The last clash in June 2002 left six South Korean sailors dead.

Clashes usually occur when fishing boats from one side cross an unmarked maritime border into the other side while chasing fish.

A temporary sea border, called the Northern Limit Line, was drawn in 1953 at the end of the three-year Korean War, but North Korea has never recognized it, insisting the sea border should be redrawn.

Monday's contact followed a military deal on June 4 to reduce tensions along the heavily fortified east-west border.

The two sides are to stop propaganda broadcasts along the 240-km land border under the accord.

They have also agreed to dismantle all propaganda materials aimed at enticing opposing soldiers to defect. AFP

Ex-US officials to assail Bush foreign policy

WASHINGTON—A group of former US officials is urging voters to deliver President George W. Bush in the November election, saying his policies have isolated the United States, a spokesperson for the group said on Sunday.

The group of 26 former diplomats and military officials, including appointees of former Republican presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, plan to issue an open statement on Wednesday criticizing Bush's foreign policies.

"We just came to agreement that the administration was really endangering the United States," said William Harrop, a former ambassador to Israel under the previous Bush administration.

The signers are critic of Democrats and Republicans, Harrop said. They include Jack Matlock and Arthur Hartman, two former ambassadors to the former Soviet Union during the 1980s.

Also in the group are several other former ambassadors and retired military officials, the group said.

Signers of the statement are concerned that the administration has undermined US leadership in the world and alienated US allies, Harrop said.

As an example, Harrop cited the decision to launch the war in Iraq without sufficient international support.

"Our view is that the President George W. Bush administration has thrust America's institution of the world in from best interest," Harrop said.

"We don't think that's going to work."

Harrop said the group was not aligned with Bush's Democratic challenger in the November election, Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry. "But we want an alternative and that's the alternative," Harrop said. Reuters

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OPINION

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Growing old

I grow old... I grow old...
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.
—From "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot

Editorial

T.S. ELIOT in "Prufrock" tells of physically and spiritually exhausted people who live in a cold, impersonal city. The poem expresses the idea of modern society as a desert and the individual within it as lost and disconnected. The persons of spokesperson in Prufrock has lived a sterile, meaningless life but he does not want to change that life. He knows he is growing old but he won't do anything about it.

Growing old is something that many look forward to with great dread and anxiety, especially in the present-day world where there is a lot of physical and financial insecurity. Bob Hope in his declining years quipped that "you know you're getting old when the candles cost more than the cake," but in the light of today's ever rising inflation rate, what he said may soon not be far from the truth.

Senior citizens are especially prone to feelings of dread and anxiety. Most of them are retired and many probably no longer have means of livelihood and manage to get by only because of the kindness of relatives, friends and strangers. The government gave senior citizens some relief in 1993 when then President Fidel V. Ramos signed into law a resolution adopting the implementing rules of the Senior Citizens Act.

Under the rules Filipinos 60 years or older are entitled to a 20 percent discount on transportation fares, hotel accommodations, restaurant and recreation center bills and medicines anywhere in the country.

Many hotels even better areas for senior citizens. The Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003 gives senior citizens more benefits and greater assistance from the government as well as private establishments. Regardless of the amount purchased or paid for, senior citizens now enjoy a 20 percent discount in hotels, restaurants, recreation centers, hospitals, theaters, concert halls, circuses, carnivals, the purchase of medicines and funeral services. (It's unfortunate that most senior citizens are not in a hurry to avail themselves of the last privilege.)

Senior citizens also get a 20 percent discount on fares for domestic air and sea travel, public land transportation, including railways, skyways, LRT, MRT, buses, jeepneys, taxis/TX as well as shuttle service. They are exempt from payment of income taxes provided that their annual income does not exceed the poverty level as determined by the National Economic and Development Authority.

Senior citizens will also be helped in availing themselves of employment opportunities, livelihood training programs and self-employment assistance. Those who would like to continue their studies can pursue post-secondary, post-tertiary as well as vocational or technical education in private and government learning institutions for free. They will also be exempt from training fees for socio-economic programs. They will get free medical and dental services, diagnostic tests and laboratory examinations in government facilities.

Under the old law, only senior citizens with an annual income of P60,000 or less were eligible for discounts in certain establishments, services and utilities. Under the new law, all Filipino citizens who are at least 60 years old are entitled to the senior citizen's discount regardless of the amount of their income.

The implementation of the new law is certainly a welcome development for senior citizens. Most senior citizens don't want to be considered useless or helpless. They want to lead productive and self-sufficient lives as long as they can. But age and retirement laws force them to retire. As Anthony Powell said in "Temporary Kings," "growing old is like being increasingly penalized for a crime you haven't committed."

Indeed, it is not a crime to be old. Growing old is a fact of life. Simone de Beauvoir said that "old age is life's parody," but it need not be—not when one has a second chance to be still productive and to be of service to society.

The senior citizens have spent the best years of their lives rendering service to their country and their communities. In their old age, they deserve some form of recognition from the nation. The least the government can do is continue to give them special privileges and benefits that will make life easier for them in their twilight years.

Pimentel – so long, friend

Viewpoint

Juan L. Mercado

FROM AUSTRALIA, Bali, Ethiopia, the United States, Thailand, and other points, the e-mail flooded in. They returned to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel's (Filsenate—send a button) [e-mail] request for prayers and hope.

Dad has coexisted with the "Bataquilis" of the Japanese occupation, Marcos loyalists and today's Arroyistas, wrote author Alfredo Roces from Jordan. Wrote Reina, Fr. Jun Mendoza asked: "Is there anything we can do for you, Tatay?" John Ong spoke from Pittsburgh and Tony Elizalde of Manila snapped: "Disgusting." "I've shared this article," retired ship captain Avance Reina sent from Bangkok. (See box on abridged version).

Why did Sen. Aquilino Pimentel weep, like Jesus, his unwilling friend on a Jerusalem fighter for a "bowl of lentils" that is virgin politics? That remains a mystery to the consortia of columnists.

People interested the triangle-eaves Senate persuites in the Estrada impeachment trials, alongside Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., he's tempted with outspoken Debate Managers.

Pimentel's comrade-in-arms Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, pre-eminent combat-man of many, he's dead and knows that crowns are fed up. Many thought he was sensitive to people. Does he regret he's gone a-duties?

Are you "friendly"—Fernando Poe Jr., Juan Ponce Enrile Jr., Tito Sotto—behind this downtrodden nation?

An unqualified *Hell, I should* was fine for a campaign aide, Pimentel replied soft—before administering him PFD duties. Like the Roman senator Cincinnatus, Pimentel himself, *ex-himself* are "honorable men." Thus, he announced recently Enrile in digging graves. But he didn't answer campaigning alongside deputy's protest.

Is the old geezer's playing out here? "Let them with mongrels, get up with fleas."

Taxpayer Sujeto didn't "shut up" now thrilled citizen Barbarian. Fellow observers marked out as Pimentel filibustered. He, he professes his innocence about duties of drafting to make up the canvass "Because of your deeds, I can't hear what you're saying," Filipino farmers say.

The Supreme Court reported, in a swift decision, the opposition's appetite to drag out the carnival. Pimentel, we all thought, was a man of Jose Rizal's clear 19-S decision strengthens its dominant belief.

Did he and saved the Manila Archbishop Cardinal's Rosales' stinging reminder? "Let flesh destroy themselves. After all this is over, what'll matter is Christ?" An editor, Junior Cardinal Sin complained. Pimentel, who prides himself on taking abuse on space, is quite publicizing.

Senatric people ask: How were they "trained" for Pimentel into voting for him, editor this Manila Businessmen noted. "Marcos should be given a posthumous award for jailing Pimentel," text messages say.

The flak is not over disagreement on politics, Hontiveros in views is just for the youths. "Differences in opinion is when statistical terms turn," Sara Tan quotes.

The reader comes from a sense of betrayal. Those who dragged it out alongside Pimentel, against Marcos' dictatorship and Estrada's corruption, feel he let them down.

Is he feeling betrayed by opposition as a response at how beginning before he became Dog's mouthpiece. Inglesias's opinions were commanded attention. Since then, they've been devalued. As Pauline Gregory's text "sounding more and more like somebody."

People may be wrong, because I know they feel, one of Pimentel's former private-in-captivity.

"When asked in Cebu, a recently pumbled Pimentel would come and I'd never him," I recall the Congo Dictator. "He'd mumble in million to gather. Now, the Inquirer showed is wrong up up this context to save democracy, to course." (Explosive delayed again.)

"Undying ambition" led the devote Bisayan to bestir Estrada, his ally. An insatiable craving for higher office, long disguised but seen apparent, drives Pimentel, perceptive commentators say.

"He became dangerously bitter" about bypassed for vice presidency, and lost the senate presidency. Columnist Ben Chanco notes. And Pimentel would seize opposition leadership from Senator Edgardo Angara, President's Ramon E. Bagatsing's son.

Angara prides himself as an educator. Yet, he learned, the opposition area doubting a high school drop-out in presidential candidate. The one pupil may be ideal for the education department's bridge programs of residential centers. But being president is another thing. He wonders, PP, was finished.

Pimentel keeps political ambitions: "No man knows the groundswell is great gnawing at him, he feels deep it will get, until he has acted to," Abraham Lincoln sadly noted.

Look at Imelda Marcos or Loren Legarda. Musical beginners would bar Marcos Sultanate. President Marcos was considered with Ferdinand Jr. as a dog-in-waiting.

No one begrudges Pimentel's ambitions. He's more qualified than 70%. But mood he will instruct? He alienated supporters who thought he learned to ignorant' blend to serve without a struggle.

Let the public official "not repose any reward but the consciousness of having done his duty, and serving his people and his God," Tennessee Honorable Sir Cooke noted in 1848 lecture on Alexander Hamilton's death. "Success are due rewards of the republic."

Alongside Pimentel, we battled mental law and rebellion decisions. We rebuilt him in prison. We his Blessed Tribunal case against display. Now, we're crumbling. But the latter assigned us, "Those friends and their adoption mind." Grasp the them to my soul with hoops of steel."

But this is no longer the Senate we knew. There's been a hard edge to his voice. His client's constituency resembles that of the "Bubble 12." Nevertheless, my family stood for him. A pity Good bye, friend.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pdi.net.ph)

Getting away with murder

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

SOMEHOW, now on this new joke a couple of months ago, in Iraq, two days after their elections, they already know the winner in Taiwan, two hours after the polls close, they already know the winner.

That is a testament, I think, not that joke-driven police response came to name, to the limited talents, according to Jesse, it takes to run for office. Or even to get to the name of the office. In England, it takes five minutes. In the Philippines, it takes one period.

The comment I heard in various gatherings over the past couple of days is what have Congress been making a fuss of lately. What's all the matter a scale, Senate or the House? Why all of a sudden are they so interested in the budget? Why are they suddenly concerned on Dialogue Dialogues and Aquilino Pimentel who, protestors say should stop wasting taxpayers' money by filibustering.

Well, in the case of Congress, I wonder sometimes if the administration isn't paying him to distract the opposition, to redirect from nine basic problems, which is not the quality of his voice, though I guess that is not a point unrelated—it's not a pleasant, it would confuse to say things if I were investigators by him. I'm not even for the fact that for me the person who also filibustered four years ago in Rizal Coter's committee to stop it from wasting to impeach Ilong. Whatever he says now will be fun in the future, or there, of their worldviews.

Of course, he can always count on this country's having undergone the witnessed of his frontal lobe, characterized by the inability to remember anything, yet every something that happened just a while ago. Michael Jackson also distinguished himself there, as did Imelda and those spectators in the Senate gallery and having their shoes out, and she is back as senator. One curious argue that Dilangalen offers a more implausible number of things pay with his voice, Mr. him offers an equally implausible reminder of a with the American Occupation.

Pimentel is another matter entirely. I did have somebody ask whatever happened to him, she used to study sociology of him. I heard that even before Juan—Cardinal Sin took it upon himself to try to persuade him to discover subdivisions. Well, if anything has happened to him, it is only to wake up from a caliper to to discover his limitations. He did fall into a slump some years ago when he fell in league with Erap, up, but I remember that even when I was considering him favorably for it, I also mentioned to praise him for championing the cause of human rights. That he never abandoned, and up there and Erap's government or the senatorial where it was imperiled.

I said then that I liked him better when he has the electronic and was wrapping a struggle, as others lonely was against dueling duenas. I say now that I like him better when he sees the electronic and continues to wage it struggle, thankfully this time not a very lonely one, against dueling liberals. It is not only because to read my column, complete with annotations, in the version of his filibustering—before material him Filipino Filibusters read the Bible—attests that he still knows how a long way toward improving the mind of Congress. It is also that, quite unlike Rodolfo Biazon, who dropped his charges of fraud after being proclaimed the last senatorial winner, Pimentel has continued to prosecute the case in the courts, including those of the electoral sort. There is one thing beyond will, and that is the tactics. I am glad Pimentel remembers it.

What I cannot understand is all this, however, is at how we can rediscover the virtues of our wasting taxpayers' money and proclaiming a quiet room in the face of Pimentel's filibuster, when there are more pressing cases of their misuse on the other hand. I have harped at length on GMAs use of government funds to campaign, comparable only to that of Marcos in 1969, which should result in the prosecution of former to murder, or worse. Government to bankruptcy, yet we cannot muster enough outrage for that. Sorry.

Be more than that, why? Have we become that insightsensitive? One would for me to bring this to a debate a subject more than a month after the elections? That to see the fault of those who are filibustering in Congress, there is the fault of the Commission on Elections. The mounting thing in all this is not how Pimentel has gotten away with filibusters, it is how Benjamin Abalos has gotten away with murder. The whole idea of automation was to produce a quick count, one that could produce results in minutes to a matter of hours. The whole idea of automation was to produce a clean count, a computer vote, where sufficient safeguards were taken, being too prone to tampering than a ballot box.

That was a urban blunder to begin with, that was what he betrayed. He did so by removing all safeguards from the computer vote, as he got with by handing over the bid for automation to a 10-day old company, in other countries, that alone would have been treated to work, documents and jail on officials. In this country, that is a reason only to go manual. In this country, the one person who supervises the voting is considered sufficiently punished if he is bribed in an obvious case. Nothing more needs to be done. Not even more training for same in accuracies, with wanting taxpayers' money and investing a count that would make us least in Commerce for another dubious distinction. Abalos could earn a name for himself there while at it. He gained enough of that already, as a murderer by a mile.

The problem isn't how Congress is making a fool of itself, it is how the government has made fools of us.

Missions impossible

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cassiman

Income plants conversation. Concepcion said he has been searching in a number of communities and provinces in his chapter title quoted in the remains of the ancient Cassona castle in the ancient Bosnian city of Sarajevo, about an hour's drive from Rome. But what they cannot find is the cunning intelligent that he has made of the cultural name of Ambassador City Dean Cotes Chinese, a staunch foe of the Marcos regime. The boys was commissioned by Chinese's nephew, Rome-based UN official Joaquin Cuenco, as commemorate the fourteenth mayor's assassination in Zamboanga City in November 1984.

* * *

Among the photos of her father that Bella Chinese's son, Concepcion particularly liked the one showing him so defiant with his stack of comfy hair. Like Concepcion's late Niner Aquino, Chinese was killed because of his political views. As Bella Cotes wrote in the book sent to this columnist, "If there can be love in five eight between subjects and state, this happened the summer Juan Concepcion saw the photos. I felt emotional by the energy that emanated from this man who appeared to have the most active force of a ball and yet there was kindness and gentleness there, too. Concepcion told Phoebe I gave to read this columnist about Juan Chinese and how he died. Juan Concepcion Cuenco Jr. (big Bull, who dropped Cuis, George Cuenco or Little Big Bob, Mordaza, in the 19th century."

Cuenco opined that what may have commercial series and tidbits was their shared roots in Mindanao and their history of cooperation and enhancement among Christians and Muslims. Few people who know Concepcion as the pioneering Filipino-Christian Democrat, indefatigable activist of the Movement for a Free Philippines and organizer of Filipino exercises labor unions, said Cuenco, may realize that he is the embodiment of such co-existence, being descended from one of Marcos's detainees most because on his mother's side.

* * *

Cotes said the two men could actually be cousins as they were both descendants of Mindanao, even though they never had the chance to meet personally. Chinese, the self-named urban planner who gave Zamboanga City her famous parks and most distinctive landmark, the Tree House, was the voice of opposition to Marcos that marital law could not muzzle. He also gave dignity and meaning to politics in Mindanao by his unwavering support of his beloved city and his continued accessibility to his constituents, he Cotes put it, his people showed their love by giving him the longest and most solemn funeral in memory and a very emotional burial at Our Mother of Perpetual Help Park.

* * *

On the other hand, said Cuenco, Concepcion, anticipating Erap E, organized a powerful but highly volatile rally against Marcos' dictatorship even as the tyranny of Ferdie, ending in front of the Philippine Embassy three hundred before the people in Manila took to Edsa in February 1986, it marked the first time the Chinese and Filipino sectors of the Liberal Party, CEBL labor unions joined the struggle for Philippine democracy. Apart from his political activities, he has worked to preserve the dignity of labor and peasants as the rights of Filipino overseas workers, which he further pursued as a personal representative for overseas workers during the Ramos years. Today, says Cuenco, Concepcion exercises his work for his native country by way of the International Filipino Lawyers in Rome and organizing discussions on the IP situation with existing leaders, local intellectuals and Filipino lawyers practicing there. The intention aims regards the formation from of Cebuano as an umpire between the Christian Filipinos, projects to ensure a revival of basic honoring Filipino leaders who distinguished themselves in the field of human rights. Zamboanguenos would be thrilled.

Ink-blotch

BOOTS RE elections, turned out to win six seats.

The lady in the voting precinct dumped my entire fingernail was so pretty and shapely, it would look great with an delete on it course-sensitive. The ink seeped inside the cuticle, and it stained the inner surface of my fingernail with a boundless like blotch. Now it looks dead, except that in dead nails, the entire nails from the nail bed. I even called a manicurist to remove it.

But, for really, she could only do so much, my fingernail was beyond repair.

I finally laughed at the ugly sight. "Hey, big, like saliva 'it repairs it'." It's okay that it will grow back, anyway.)

YOUNG BLOOD

Rita Maria Medina

While having breakfast at McDonald's, I was straining to my inner about the tragedy that was my fingernail: "Are its nerves near close together? How could the be so insensitive? Didn't she know that I'd have a hard time deciding what to order? And should I order anything more than coffee if I just had the aching need what if not again?

In all her Ate-Wisdom, she tells me, "It looks bad, alright. But it's a sign of something good."

Or sign seems: (Oh, yeah.)

Even if the people I voted for were clearly underdogs, at least I knew I was exercising my right of suffrage according to criteria I think are worthy of positions in government. Criteria are not, and even now, in some countries, women are not even allowed to vote. I guess that makes me and my fellows quite fortunate to have that opportunity. Isn't it?

And I am just grateful for people who, one years ago, the neighbors voted right. It's about giving out to vote for the people whom you know are honest, trustworthy and can patiently steer the nation into its yearning glory. I can see also the criteria for awards, for nominees, filling up my ballot, again imposing my thumb-print on the Board. I can send friends and relatives to the polls to do the same. I have my true sense of power—not only to choose, but more importantly, to actually exercise that choice, and God knows how sure that chance comes. The feeling that I can do everything if I just willed it made an overwhelming moment. Wanting to vote is power to be.

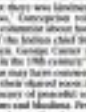
Hope of my candidates may have lost, but class again it will serve elaborate me from exercising my right to vote in my lifetime or the next. True strength lies in the people who know what they are doing, who exercise their rights not just for a meager P500, or motorcade, or special favor. Enough has to people realize that they have sovereignty.

That Google ad it correct: dignity is not easy. And I am one of the least successful women in the Philippines.

Do inquire and exchange ink-blotch links.

Rita Maria Medina, 28, is a senior BA Psychology student in UP Diliman.

National embarrassment



AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

YESTERDAY'S "Commentary," a reflection on the meaning of our Independence Day celebrations and the ways we have honored Filipinos gone in resisting Filipino pride, mentioned an incident that tells us why it's often Filipino shame, or at least embarrassment, that we feel these days.

The incident took place during the concert held at the famed Albert Hall (long list of other members, up in, as a Prime who left the country and his family when he was only 14 to escape the rule of powerful Ferdinand Marcos), however, has not stopped Apl from asserting his Pinoy identity. Or at least, he has not stopped remembrance in his family songs and performances.

During the concert, Apl asked everyone in the audience to "choose the right president." The concert apparently was taught because the election was held in the United States and Canada, not in the Philippines. Apl's choice was clearly Barack Obama, "Hope na! Oh! Sweet!," but as months long there, the subject turned. "Now, the swing is over but the campaigning is taking forever!"

The event really blows Apl for thinking that we're still in the middle of the campaign for president, since come June 30, if Congress doesn't get it done on, we will end up with no president, and the country will be plunged into what politicians ominously call a "constitutional crisis."

Apl's remark, which was intended mainly, even, time more than a minute after the May 10 polls, we have yet to come up with the final results of the elections. All throughout a month, long missions for the United States and Canada, my siblings and I have been glued to the television, with the eyes using your paper's on-line edition, to keep our orders updated on the election results. In time, we could only decipher whatever friends or US-based relatives asked us about the election results, emphasizing the fact that we should have already worked out and the votes were still being counted. Sue by Hundred and done by Congress.

* * *

NOW we're entering the "extended mode" of the proceedings, having come with everything performing bribed to avail accusations to establishing the calculations to avoid the "constitutional crisis" that would arise should a "power vacuum" occur after June 30.

Not you wouldn't know it given what opposition lawmakers have been doing and saying, the number of objections they've been raising, and their demands that the computerized consolidated canvass election returns done in the manual mode of proceedings. Even a rule which, on the President's lawyer stance, will take two years to complete.

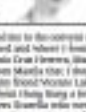
There must be a reason why the law has set a deadline on the work of the computerized canvassing committees, and why the count of votes has been limited to verifying the results of the precincts' certificates of canvass. Lawmakers would have known that the time allowed the Congress to finish the counting of votes should be a reasonable one to prevent losers from creating, or allow for a more detailed analysis of voting results on a case-to-case basis.

Everybody knows our system of voting and counting is subject to the human factor, that it is riddled with loopholes and is subject to too many occasions for fraud and manipulation. But the work of performing, or at least inspecting, the system should be done either by refocusing the law on the provisions that would at least implementing to many well-intentioned provisions), or punishing all violators, including lawmakers, parties and Comelec personnel.

THERE is actually a precedent for our situation, and that is the last national elections in the USA of States. As we all know, the incredible hap-

(continued on page A13)

A Picaresque Tale (II)



SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Ramón L. Bautista

(continued from page A11)

Cris Agustin is the journalistic icon and even to movie fanatics to discuss the matters, and if you, who would seek to know occasion that it would affect are the people. As a result, there began a certain double attempts on its Carlito that. I wasn't aware of new Filipino luminous achieved me to make sure because my life was in danger.

* * *

In the meantime, in several conversations with Warren Lubban, he stated that there was no formal agreement with Admiral Dewey about the establishment of the base in the Philippines, but informally, they were allowed to use Hong Kong as a port in China in the ship Pasig going to the Philippines, which had been occupied by the English authorities in Hong Kong to the request of the American consul there. He stated that he had formal advice to the effect that Admiral Dewey was not disposed to grant any concessions to the Filipinos, that after using Agoncillo as an instrument to ensure the revolutionaries they would abandon him.

"In view of that I told him to inform Agoncillo that it was urgent to obtain from Admiral Dewey a formal written agreement, or else Admiral Lubban assured that it was difficult because Agoncillo would himself compromised, thus the only person who could talk to him would be Felipe Agoncillo upon whose advice Agoncillo had received in the Philippines without any written agreement with Dewey.

"A few days before, Isidoro Amador and his brother, Agustin in to Rosa, Celestino Aragon and others had arrived in Cavite in the same time as Aguinaldo. He arrived in Cavite, they were detained by a great number of soldiers. Agustin and the two Amador brothers and Aragon were dispersed to the interior of the province. The cause of this was the famous question of the money of Hong Kong. Unfortunately nothing further is said regarding the money. Wetzel edited. 8888. I

Yearnings

Mark Joseph Deutsch

TO BE GRADUATED were introduced, the platform presented, the presidents delivered, the defense heard, the decisions weighed and the propagandists stifled. The master garnet, attributed and detailed and noted. And now the exams, ing and the waiting. In the balance are a country, governplaint positions, and a position with a very familiar influence "Should I stay or should I go?"

One friend has decided to leave. His migration papers are ready. The infirmed certificates that he has worked on as requirements for the job that is waiting for him abroad are ordered under his belt, the relatives that have gone before him consigned. Everything is ready, and only the issue of the still-off-call-it-what-you-will-I-don't-care-to-be looking for the moon, but he's does not coming back, due to the time frame anyway, the odd issue, the decision is final.

Another friend is staying, he's doubtless and talented, and though he can leave if he chooses to—is fine, he has the means to do so—he has remained to stay. What makes him so unlike he has chosen to endure the hardships in a land where the majority has neither a good education nor the opportunity for employment, much less material comfort. His decision is final. And I admire him.

Another friend soon—for the ballots to be counted, the posts filled, the politicians eligible to contend and the promised developments delivered. If some of these come true, he too will leave our shores. But I will not score him; I will understand him. He has to provide a future for his family, since they suffer with the rest of the country? I base my family of my own. He has to provide a future for his family, since they suffer with the rest of the country? I base my family of my own. He has to provide a future for his family, since they suffer with the rest of the country? I base my family of my own. He has to provide a future for his family, since they suffer with the rest of the country? I base my family of my own.

Poverty, terrorism, unemployment, underemployment, arson, queer wars, corruption, poor quality of education. These have become reasons for leaving the Philippines. The "People Power Capital" of the world is losing its people. Many have already left, but there is a hostile desire spreading for the rest. Those who are staying feel that we are burdened with ultimately have and reasons not. Oh, I have tried to help my country, but there is no hope." Others still will stay just because they really wish to remain in the country, but adding them will be those who would have left but for lack of resources. Those who would have the resources but for fear. I, blessed, they will have a or four's Philippines, like they could at as black their less are been serving significant changes.

More likely though, many of us would pass away before seeing the hoped-for changes. We strive-some for a future in which our children and their children and grandchildren will be secure—in some measure for have grown careful serving a society that has gone from bad to worse, because we want to have a different manifestation of people power, one that emphasize as proactive more, not just for a few days or every other selves years, but for always through all generations.

That's everything to which I aspire. I want to be part of a new revolution. It without shedding hope and love of country. But it demands sacrifice, but the young and our elders, hope and living in this seemingly forsaken country are the only ones that can make those precious things come true. We have to make them our responsibility, to serve as the basis of our labors—the things we yearn for in our lifetime. But meet the challenge we must because we do not want our children to suffer for our mistakes and omissions in the past.

The Philippines is the only country we have. The only one we can bequeath to our children. We don't want the country abandoned by them.

Mark Joseph Deutsch is 26, and is studying for his master's degree in Information Technology at the University of San Carlos, Cebu.

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Public education should give the poor preferential treatment

LETTERS

From next year, I am joining the more than 20 percent of the parents who are transferring their children from private schools to public schools. I feel guilty about this, especially since I see images on TV of people being made to squat on school floors simply because there are not enough desks. By this year due to my husband's restructuring agreement, we had to relocate to some far-flung place in the South where the only candidate learning institution is a public school.

The other day, coming from school, my fourth grade son informed me that some classmates of his didn't receive a complete set of textbooks. "There were not just enough textbooks for everybody. I wish I could just buy him his new set of books so that he could give back the books issued to him. The public school textbooks are not reusable bookstores."

There are a number of middle-class parents who send their children to public schools. Many of these parents can afford to pay at least P30,000-P35,000 for their children's classes. If only private schools would pay their fees without charging incidental nonsense from like what the University of the Philippines does, it is utterly unjust for upper and middle class children to enjoy free education while their parents can afford to pay for it, while depriving deserving poor children of free educational services. Think of the additional textbooks, classrooms, teachers and laboratory equipment that would instead flow to our schools.

The Department of Education's adage a classroom proper is another great idea. However, DepEd must drum up the project a little bit more so that it would generate a powerful momentum. Can you imagine what will happen if every family, corporation and civic organization including our glorious Filipino associations would adopt a classroom?

Revitalizing our moribund education system is a realization of every thinking Filipino. Everybody must be ready to sacrifice a bit, share some of their resources. The absolute or the thought of seeing our youth brilliant (poorly educated) and to only to be the "index finger" of the world."

—CHEN ARANDIA,
chenbarandia@yahoo.com

What's with Conrad?

I HAVE refrained for so long from making remarks about Conrado de Quiros' silent mannerist remarks on Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's every act. I cannot understand why he hates her so much. I think that nothing has criticism for her from the very first day she assumed office, albeit to the point of portraying her as the devil incarnated.

Simply because he was my friend, drinking partner, chess and basketball playmate as well as officemate in the Department of Public Information during the martial law era, and I had known him to be an idealistic and passionate person (yes, for the Marcos-haters among the readers, I have to surprise you that there were idealists and intellectuals even among those who served the Marcos regime in the 70s), I assumed he had his objective reasons, even when I felt he was not objective at all.

But his column on June 9 is just too much. He insinuates that in the discrepancy in the figures of Certificate of Canvass 21 (the local elementary voting results), Macapagal is the beneficiary of the excess votes, how can anyone tell which is which in the canvass sheets?

There was an allowance in the figures of votes for all the presidential candidates. Even if there was no honest mistake, the only way anyone can pinpoint where the cache votes went is to recount all the ballots. The names votes could have gone to Fernando Poe Jr. or Ping Lacson, or Susan Roces or Eddie Villanueva, as well as to Macapagal-Arroyo, as many have been distributed among all the presidential candidates.

To pinpoint anybody as the beneficiary of true discrepancy without recounting the ballots is not very objective.

—ENRIQUE BLANCO
Daily Spirit, Quezon City,
edejose17@yahoo.com

Disappointed with Nene

I AM a great admirer of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel. But this always makes me feel that there is something to hope for in a Senate where most members are elected on the basis of showbiz glitz or dynastic patronage.

But today a spate of movements, Pimentel has wounded himself beyond repair as a senator in the floor of Congress. He has been backing the senseless taxing frenzy of the opposition, insensible of the growing public distaste to think the groundless maligning of votes as vote scrambles.

Pimentel should have gone for honorable exit at the culminating of the years he assumes by the Commission on Elections. That was the most appropriate time to question the authenticity of the COCs, seeing that the name set of documents would have no basis for the presence of all the winners in the national and vice presidential race.

Ironically, when he attempts attack Estrada which the public showed favorable results for him. I am sure if he had failed to make the "magic 12," he would have surely tried first like what he did to the 1995 elections as a victim of rigging. Sorry.

The question for Pimentel is why question the COCs only now? Is his act pure grandstanding or part of the "far predetermined scenario" that opposition is banking?

—ROGER GUZON G. SEGARIO
Barrio ng Dotta Annex
University of the Philippines, Diliman, Q.C.

Clarifications from Bayan Muna

THANK you very much for giving our side on the malicious and self-serving efforts of Regional Director Alvarez Sumagaysay to disqualify Bayan Muna and five other progressive party-list groups (PEL 01-4/04).

Please allow me, however, to clarify some of his assertions in the letter he sent to you.

First, more than the administration's ridiculous campaign, what prevented some progressive party-list groups from winning seats in the House was the systematic, well-orchestrated and comprehensive campaign of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, and various government agencies and local government units to harass our key cadres and supporters. The three cases of arrests of illegal—not only based on propaganda and outright fabrication, harassment, physical assault, waves' shutdown harassment, midnight cleaning and vandalism of billboards—is proof our claim.

While we always pursued an open campaign for maximum support and more than our small base gathered, the fact is that Bayan Muna still emerged first. It is the campaign style there seats, without any doubt, that made us the target of Gloria's ire. This proves that the people saw through the lies peddled by Gonzales and the AFP-PNP et. al. That is clearly stated in the COC of the people's vote for us as a result of the massive campaign by many for us a result of the people's vote for us as a result of the politics and the failure of the government's black propaganda to break this vote.

And this is why our class expected cheating at the polls, namely on the administration's side. Its entire campaign failed to effect the blatant, brutal, unabashed and deadly attacks that our parties suffered in the course of our electoral struggle. Bayan Muna already count nine victims as of this date campaign, seven from the military, five Amalgamis, two Anak ng Bayan and one Gabriela Women's were slain. The numbers do not include those still missing.

Second, I believe that in the massive cheating and fraud that Anak ng Bayan and Bayan Bangsamoro were subjected to, it did party were same as the matter of making the fraud of election inspectors in our province in Bayan Muna could have been the first victim of Anak ng Bayan and Bayan Muna is in his father, where Bayan Bangsamoro is based, was having arrested in a most massive scale, affecting over that party list's accepted votes. Both parties are now in the process of filing their respective complaints before the commission on elections.

—TEODORO CASIÑO,
Bayan Muna, 1 Mamalo cor. Kanlaon St.,
Central Diliman, Diliman, Quezon City

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Troops foil NPA raid on Army station

By Alan Pol and Carla P. Gomez
INQ Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Government soldiers foiled plans of the New People's Army (NPA) to raid the company headquarters of the 542nd Engineering Construction Battalion in Kernayan Tarpan, Guihulngan, Negros Oriental, but an Army soldier said a rebel were killed Saturday.

The Army casualty was identified as Staf. Sergeant Agapito Ida-Ida, assigned with the 542nd Engineering Construction Battalion based

BIR exec fails lifestyle check, gets suspended

Front page ▶ A

check program last year, it has ordered the suspension or dismissal of more than 15 officials from the BIR, the Bureau of Customs and the Department of Public Works and Highways.

"There is no letup in the President's lifestyle check program. Let this be a warning to graft-ridden government," Assistant Ombudsman Emmanuel Rivera said in a press statement.

In a June 10 order, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo placed Valencia under preventive suspension for six months for dishonesty, falsification of public documents and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

The order was based on the recommendation of Maria Olivia Elena A. Roma, a graft investigator of the Ombudsman's Fact Finding and Intelligence Bureau (FIB), who acted as complainant in the case.

Business interests

Roma said Valencia failed to declare in his Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) ownership of eleven eight pieces of registered property in Davao City, Roxas City and Surigao del Sur, which were registered under his name and that of his wife Estrella.

Valencia, 52, also reportedly failed to disclose the business interest of his wife as a lessee of a real estate in Davao City in violation of anti-graft laws.

All these "are strong indications of guilt on the part of [Valencia] for the administrative offense of dishonesty," Roma said.

It was while poring over the income tax returns of Valencia that Roma found inconsistencies in the BIR official's declared net worth.

"Thus, in 1998, with P196,000.00 in salary, the increase in net worth of P839,737.00 could not be explained as it corresponds to 114 percent of his income. In 1999, with P204,384.00 in salary, the increase in net worth of P848,197.70, likewise finds no explanation as it is equivalent to 398 percent of the income," the investigator said.

Valencia declared net worth was P2,443,000 in 1998 and P3,286,200 in 1999.

Grossly disproportionate

The biggest increase in his net worth happened in 2002, the year Valencia was made acting collector in Valenzuela. His net worth rose to P5,515,403.57, an increase of P1,539,838.83. The increase represented 227 percent of his income of P647,488.00.

"With these findings, inquiring questions may be asked: where the increase is not worthy is more than the income, where did the increases come from and how did the family survive, or where did they derive the money for their expenses?" Roma asked.

She said it was "evident that assets from the undeclared assets, the declared assets appear to be grossly disproportionate to the income" of Valencia.

Thus, she said there was sufficient basis for the suspension.

The inquirer tried to reach Valencia, who was transferred to Quezon City last year, but his secretary Christine Garcia said he was in a meeting the whole day. Valencia did not call us of press time the contact numbers she left were given Garcia.

Seven-layered reports circulating from BIR's officials that there was a "hidden agenda" on the lifestyle check program of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Roma said there would be more graft cases to be filed against the BIR, BOC and DPWH officials, but he declined to name the respondents.

He said the Office of the Ombudsman was even strengthening its capacity to fight graft by hiring 50 more graft investigators in the coming months. Armando M. Roque

Gov. Padaca 'more relieved than happy'

Front page ▶ A

were the Oy family is having because their leader lost. We are also hearing from our supporters in the past 48 years of the dynasty."

All this should mail "for the sake of the people of Isabela," Padaca said.

Legal obstacles

The proclamation was scheduled at 10 a.m., but Oy's lawyers demanded that the provincial board of canvassers postpone it for another week, on a plea that filed a petition for certiorari before the Supreme Court.

Padaca won by more than 40,000 votes over Oy, but the former governor earlier succeeded in stalling the proclamation by filing several cases against her before the Comelec.

Oy's petition for suspension of proclamation was granted by the Comelec's First Division on May 31, less than 24 hours after it was filed.

On June 9, the division issued a resolution where it reversed the earlier ruling, lifted and permanently set aside the suspension order.

Yesterday, Oy's lawyer Pete Cuevas charged that due process was being violated, since the Comelec en banc issued a resolution while the case was still pending before the First Division. But despite his client's petition before the high court, he said, Commissioner Mehol Sadain issued a memorandum directing the board of canvassers to proclaim the winners.

The lawyer noted also some issues, but all his points were refuted by Padaca's lawyer, Lito de Lima, and deputy Interior and local government Lorna Kapunan, and dismissed by the board of canvassers.

At around 11:30 a.m., the board—composed of Comelec lawyers Michael Mendez and Joel Villanueva—called on Padaca's name and at 12:10 p.m., Padaca was proclaimed.

Oy's promise

In a statement, Oy said he did not agree with the Comelec decision, but that he "supported" it. He added that he accepted Padaca as the winner and that he respect his right to pursue the case before the Supreme Court.

But in the same statement, he vowed to work with his successor "for the benefit of Isabelenos."

He said: "The Oy family will definitely not resort to foul play and will not be a problem." Then he said it back again. "Even if I am no longer governor, I will continue to uphold our democratic way of life, help maintain peace and order, and protect the Isabelenos against any attack by communist insurgents."

His camp accused Padaca of being supported by communists.

El Bayan town, Mayor Delfino Albano also promised to support Padaca and urged his fellow mayors in Isabela to set aside political and personal differences and do the same.

Albano, a known Oy ally, told the Inquirer: "We welcome her with open arms. We hope she will be able to fulfill her promises during the campaign. This is a big call for mayors and top leaders of the province."

Asked about their camp's pending cases against Padaca, Albano said they were leaving these to the courts as "sole arbiter." Meanwhile, he said, "we respect the decision of the majority of Isabelenos."

He said his nephew, Rep. Rodolfo Albano III, would soon meet the 11 mayors in the first district of Isabela and affirm their help for the new provincial government.

Several other mayors declined to comment on yesterday's proclamation, saying they were taking a "wait-and-see" attitude.

Cauayan City Mayor Cesar Oy, a brother of Faustino Jr.'s, said on a Padaca-assumed office, he would seek her help in financing programs and projects for his constituents.

"I'll die a man in her words," the mayor said. "I will personally present my hand to the cause of reconciliation and work with her."

In a contrary move, lawyer Estanislao Fernandez Jr., another Oy counsel, said a legal team was preparing a petition to annul Padaca's proclamation.

Fernandez said the petition would be filed either before the Commission on Elections' second division or the Supreme Court.

Fernandez said the decision "Once it [the proclamation] is declared void, there will be a vacuum seat in the province ... as if it did not happen." With Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

'Bomb' . . .

Front page ▶ A

it, then scrambled to clear the explosive for blasting.

They waited. ... and waited. After a few minutes, they decided it was safe.

Fear, though, the bag contained nothing combustible—just a piece of women's underwear and brassiere, a water wand, a cell phone, a compact disc and scraps of paper.

The brown, yellow and red bag was delivered at around 5:15 p.m. to the Supreme Court's Commercial Building on Padre Faura Street in Ermita, Manila.

According to members of the Western Police District's Explosives and Ordnance Division (EOD), the "bomb" sent by was a lawyer and that the package, which he put down right outside the gate, was "for the Chief Justice."

There, by optical scope, alarming the guards. Taking a closer look at the bag, they noticed that its top was rolled shut. They hastily called the police.

"The man probably just wanted to create a disturbance for people on their way to work," one of the EOD experts said.

But while revealing that the Supreme Court would not be receiving threats, Senior Assoc. Justice Josue N. Bellosillo, the court's public information officer, said in a statement that the tribunal was now on "heightened alert."

Bhat said the high court's security officers were now about to raise chances, since the move could have been a ruse to test their preparedness.

As far as the justices were concerned, he added, bomb scares were just among the "hazards of the profession ... that come with the territory."

The Supreme Court had received threats in the past through letters and telephone calls, Bhat revealed, but added that these were "rare and far between."

Danilo Pelletz, chief security officer, confirmed that, saying the last one was recorded two years ago.

Pelletz described yesterday's prankster as "30 to 40 years old, about 5 feet 8 inches tall, muscular and brown-skinned, and wore a maroon polo shirt, long cargo pants."

He said it was when security officer Cheryl Alvarez stepped forward to fetch the bag that the bomb hit town.

Chief Insp. Leroy Aguanal of the NPD said the paper bag—with all its contents—had been sent to the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory in Camp Crame.

Maybe the CD contains a romantic note. Maybe the brassiere could provide a lead.

Maybe we are the victim of a cunningly arranged prank, Atty. Bhat said. He admitted that the Supreme Court got its fair share of threats and that they came around monthly, almost on the 15th. However, he pointed out, the most recent one of the magnitude

METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Suspected mastermind in Sy slay case nabbed

By TJ Burgonio

Drive vs illegal gambling in schools set

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Tina Santos

VIDEO machines such as this one being played by a student near his school could be used in illegal gambling paraphernalia. (JOEY ARANCO)

PROTEST AGAINST SLOW COUNT
Members of a civic police patrol grab several activists during a rally outside the Congress in Quezon City on Monday. Dozens of demonstrators held die protest to denounce the slow counting of votes by Comelec's following the May 10 presidential election. (ALTH)

Navotas priest stabbed dead by 2 robbers

By Edson Cortes Tordesillas Jr.

Fare discounts year-round for studes—LTFRB

By Luige del Puerto

Malabon standoff continues

Vicencio reports for work, but Yumbao won't budge

By Edson C. Tordesillas Jr.

Erring traffic aides, beware

Nothing irregular in boots contract

ON TARGET
Kuyumi Ruiz

REAL ESTATE

E-mail: pr_real_estate@inquirer.net.ph

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Nonexistent subdivision sold to low-income families

By Jerry Esplanada

CALLED "Hiyas ng Bukiran," the village supposedly intended for low-income families offers would-be homeowners the chance to live right next to Bukaneg's greatest tourist attraction—the historic Biak-na-Bato national park.

With its "spectacular landscapes," the Bulacan provincial government has purportedly declared the 1,500-plus hectare area, located just 12 kilometers from Poblacion, San Miguel town, the province's new township tourism project for low-income families.

Residential lots there cost only P25,000 to P75,000 on a first-come, first-serve basis, with reservation fees of P3,000 to P5,000 depending on the size of the property.

Nonexistent subdivision

But there's only one problem, Hiyas ng Bukaran Village does not exist.

A check with the San Miguel town hall disclosed that no such subdivision was being developed in the municipality.

The Philippine National Police says area metropolitan groups, mainly professional squatter syndicates, are behind the racket.

Blak-na-Bato Development Corp., the alleged land developer, is also nonexistent. It does not have a field of file in Securities and Exchange Commission.

As the provincial capitol in Malolos City officials said Bulacanos take pride in the real Hiyas ng Bukaran, which happens to be province's first resources and a must-see tourist spot. It was established in 1937, they said.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources insiders have expressed serious concern over the sale of land that is actually part of the watershed and forest reservation of Biak-na-Bato, one of the country's 68 national parks.

Reservations

Several homeowners at the government squatter resettlement site in Tayuman, Binan, are among those who have made reservations for 200 to 400 square meter lots in the Hiyas ng Bukaran Village.

They learned about the "new housing project" from real estate agents living in the same squatter reservation, located along the northeastern coast of Laguna de Bay.

They said they had no reason to doubt their romantic because they were the same ones who had earlier helped them acquire lots in the squatter colony.

THE HANGING bridge inside the Biak-Na-Bato National Park in Bulacan

At this writing, the DENR has no clarification on the issue.

The agency's efforts are focused on, among others, reviewing a 350-hectare marble mining area in Biak-na-Bato to its former status as part of the national park and stopping illegal quarry operations in the reservation.

Some homeowners in San Miguel, Angat and Bustos, backed by armed men and personal ties with a top provincial official, are heading the illegal operations, reports said.

Bulacan environment and natural resources officer Hayde Medina Jr. declined to be interviewed for this story.

Last Sunday, some environmentalists in the town fired the regular shots over the nation's 106th independence day with a renewed call for Malacañang and Congress to act once and for all on the Biak-na-Bato issue.

Protected area

The DENR had asked the Palace to formally declare the 466-hectare park a "protected area," like the other 50-plus reservoirs of biodiversity importance.

Declaring Biak-na-Bato a protected area also requires congressional approval.

"Our agency has always considered the mining area a part of the park. We maintain the position that reverting the quarry site to its former status is the right thing to do," reasoned Pedro Gatbalo, PAWD-Region 3 head.

Mining license

Some 500 hectares from the 2,117-ha. government reservation was excluded for "mineral prospecting and exploration" on June 5, 1982 by then President Ferdinand Marcos (under Proclamation 2294).

Executive Order 246 and Presidential Decree 463, the late strongman also ordered the issuance of mining permits to Dr. Lourdes S. Nuesad, one of the Marcos family physicians, and her firm Basecrest Mining and Development Corp.

On Aug. 5, 1982, Basecrest was issued a five-year mining license by the Marcos administration.

But before the environmental license could expire in 1987 Marcos's declaration was revoked in 1986 by then President Corazon Aquino shortly after the assumed power.

Three years later, Aquino issued her own decree dividing Biak-na-Bato into four sectors. Proclamation 404 created a smaller national park with an area of only 560 hectares, a watershed area (938 has.), forest reserve (419 has.) and a 950-ha. mineral reservation which also covered Basecrest's quarry site.

License cancellation

Subsequently, Basecrest's license was cancelled by the DENR, prompting the mining company to take the department before a Quezon City court.

In September 1996, Basecrest got a favorable ruling from the court which declared the firm's mining property rights had been violated by the DENR.

According to the same court, Basecrest's license was valid for 25 years and for three years that had been used up before its cancellation.

The Office of the Solicitor General appealed the court ruling but failed to submit on time the appeal papers.

Notice of violation

Sometime in May 1998, the DENR office in Bulacan issued a notice of violation for Basecrest's failure to secure an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) for a 2.6-kilometer access road the company had earlier put up.

But Panicod asserted the ECC was not necessary.

Basecrest later converted its mining permit to a Mines Production Sharing Agreement or MPSA as required by the 1986 Constitution.

Its legal woes notwithstanding, the DMRB is "not giving up," said Dalihan.

Biak-na-Bato is located 75 km north of Manila. It is one of the remaining ecosystems in the country with rare limestone forests, the others being Cuban caves in Cagayan and St. Paul subterranean national park in Palawan.

Ortigas Home Depot open to public

THE NEW Ortigas Home Depot located at the corner of Doña Julia Vargas Avenue and Meralco Avenue is now open to the public.

Considered as the one of the biggest home depots in the country today, the Ortigas Home Depot is a two-level, well-ventilated edifice with air-conditioning systems built on a sprawling, 20,000-square-meter prime property at Ortigas Center.

FAÇADE of the Ortigas Home Depot which is open on a dry-run basis

Newest concept

Ortigas Home Depot offers the newest concept in convenience shopping for all your construction and interior needs.

The do-it-yourself hardware section called the "Home Builder's Superstore" is now open on a dry-run period to the public. It is one of the largest fully air-conditioned DIY stores with about 5,000-sq.m floor selling area with wide aisles for easier mobility. Shopping for your needs is hassle-free because over 33 strategic areas have been carefully planned to the selling area.

The Ortigas Home Depot is owned and operated under the professional management expertise of CW Marketing and Development Corp., a joint venture of Cebu Directory/Baldoza Co. Inc. and First Pinoy Industrial Sales Co. Inc.

Second home depot

With over 30 years experience in hardware and construction requirements, this is the second home depot project of Cebu Directory/Baldoza Co. in Metro Manila after establishing the Cebu Home Builders Depot in Cebu (CBD).

The Pinoy Industrial Sales Co. has been a 40-year impression owned in importation and wholesale of industrial and construction materials with capital, high-quality product lines.

When fully operational in July, the Ortigas Home Depot will carry over 30,000 items (stock keeping units) in terms of different products and labels.

Other services inside the Ortigas Home Depot are the "supervisor hub" for every member of the family and a "Pet Hypermart" for pet lovers.

Adjacent to the home depot is the soon to open Ortigas Auto Depot, a lineups of famous mall, supermarket, restaurants and bars, auto-retail strip center and a golf driving range.

A guarded parking area for over 500 automotive vehicles to also available to the diners.

The Ortigas Home Depot is open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on its dry-run basis.

Stop termites before they attack

STOP an eyed is listen, just look closely for untreated gowns that might be silently crawling and gnawing at the interiors in your home. Termites, unlike other house pests, hardly make their presence felt until the damage has been done.

In fact, their vicious deeds involve more than just ordinary repairs. Sagging floors, dried up wooden door frames, structures on walls along with piles of sawdust-like wood crumbs in darkened corners or halls. Of all the things homeowners had to put up with in a quality living, termites come out #1 in everything.

A homeowner must pay attention to tiny but very important details to avoid termites becoming a pesky problem.

• Never keep wooden junk supplies under the house. Need to replace it in the house to box. When there is wood, termites are likely to move in. The least wood present, the better.

• Make sure gutters are well maintained. The concrete rainwater it kept 18-24 inches away from the foundation to prevent termites from being lured to bedrooms.

• Avoid fallen smoke within the house. The tiniest crevice makes a convenient entryway for termites. Best to have any little opening, especially in windows and doors sealed to avoid termites presence at home.

• Do away with excessive moisture in the house. Basements and spaces under sink accumulate moisture that conceal attractive to termites as it helps keep dry all the time.

• Seek professional help. It never hurts to be cautious when it comes to dealing with termites. Seeking assistance from an authorized operator of Insecticide Termite Control Elimination System is common among homeowners frugal to termite woes.

Insecticide Termite Control Elimination System is the most reliable process of extermination because it uses a highly efficient baiting system technology to eliminate proliferation of termites. Unlike liquid termiticides which treat only regular termites, this termite process of elimination targets the core of termite colonies, another termites. What's more, it uses minimal chemicals only where termites are present. The treatment contains no anti-site properly sealed and discreetly placed from, unless to have unused children or even pets.

Scientists Termite Colony Elimination System offers long term protection for homes threatened by termite infestation and proves most effective than any other termite control measures.

To know more about the Scientific Termite Colony Elimination System, call 819-1988, 726-1174, 920-8174, 378-8145, 861-0482 or visit www.scientific.com.

SPORTSWATCH

RP mtbikers sweep cross-country races

CAMBU SITE—Many cross passed Mona Mendoza by Filipino riders in Country Classic and Elite/ 30KM Individual cross-country events for The Philippines cycling relay at the 1st Southeast Asian Mountainbike Championships cross-country event at the Famous Classic D. Memorial Complex here. Governor Jun Velasco, Southeast Asian Games cross-country gold medalist, clocked 2:22:23 to capture the men's Elite 30km championships contested by Vice Ahmad Sidek and Dan Miguel Ruiz. Both riders from Malaysia, the 27-year-old Sidek outraced the young 19 to 1:16 for the Philippines. Indonesian cyclist Mohamad Ardiansyah finished 3rd with 2:22:23

SPORTS

Email sc_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Edit: Teddyboy S. Molmisa

SMB sends volatile Long packing

Import has become 'irascible' over losses

By Jaime Marzano

FLOP flying into a temper over his team's back-to-back defeats, import Art Long has been given the boot by a ramrod San Miguel Beer squad still hoping against hope of forging a playoff for a semifinal slot in the PBA Grass Roots Fiesta Conference.

A stinking San Miguel official reminded said Long would be put on a plane bound for the United States as early as today, letting the Beermen embrace a reinforcement who has since the US Pro Am selection on Sunday.

"He has become irascible after those bum losses," said the official, who requested anonymity.

We bet that Art's frustration caught with two losing by the PBA he left. He just want that to happen."

The 6-foot-8 Long reportedly flew into a rage after the Beermen bowed to the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals on Saturday, San Miguel, which signed the import to replace with 4 minutes 18-0 deficit, after lost to the Red Bull Barako in their opening game of the quarterfinals.

The official, pushed the Beermen on the threshold of early elimination.

The official emphasized, it was what Long did to merit his early departure.

But team members and the import were to say, even the Beermen's fate that he could not think clearly about what he was saying or doing.

Long could not be reached for comment yesterday. The official said it would be wise to leave the import, who now has a "really, really short fuse," alone.

He said Long "could explode" on the slightest provocation.

There is talk that Long might go to have been furloughed by a team and was in the United States, but the management of the bird and brokerage conglomerate immediately ruled this out.

Long will try to remembered as one of the league's finest imports who somethingly ruined his team in the top of the elimination round series shut of the championship.

Long, known for his rough playing style, averaged 28.8 points on 56.3-percent shooting, 17.2 rebounds, 4.2 assists, 2.3 blocks and 1.2 steals in the Beermen's first 10 games.

The former Seattle Supersonic power forward played second in rebounding and shotblocks, fourth in field goal percentage and ninth in scoring during the eliminations.

Long's figures remained consistent in the quarters, logging in six two-up of 28 points and 10 rebounds against the Bolts and the Phone Pals.

Coach Jong Uichico and the Beermen are now in danger of missing the conference semifinals for only the third time in the last 16 conferences.

The Beermen entered rainy coming from a nine-day break resting the quarterfinals, with Long far from being his old swaggering self. Danny Seigle, Jeric Teng and Nic Belasco also struggled in the quarters.

Besides that choice of scheming to the semifinals are think, there's a strong possibility that the Beermen might opt for an all-Filipino army against the US reinforcement.

Annika takes it; Jenny stumbles

AFP/GALEN: 18-hole collapse

WILMINGTON, Delaware—Annika Sorenstam blew away the field over the first 36 holes with a 7-under 64 to build a six-shot lead Sunday, then survived a fourth-hole meltdown and a late charge by Alin Myrie to win the LPGA Championship for the second straight year.

A bogey from the bunker on the final hole gave her a 1-over 73, only the second round over par she's ever had. One more bogey would've tied Sorenstam for the first time in a year ago. She had a four-round total of 271.

But still that mattered was the trophy awaiting her box.

"This one feels great," said Sorenstam, the undisputed superstar of women's golf. "I played really well in the morning, but for some reason it started to slip away. Obviously I'm very glad I turned it around."

She finished the first hole of the Grand round and score of her challengers—Filipino one Jennifer Rosales, Mexican Lorena Ochoa, Juli Inkster and Korean Grace Park—started to balk.

Rosales closed out with rounds of 74 and 72 to finish 11 strokes behind Sorenstam at 282.

Playing in a third-to-last group with Sorenstam and Inkster, Rosales ran into trouble on the ninth hole and her third shot on the second hit the trees and nearly hit Sorenstam.

"The tournament almost ended right there," CBS Sports analyst David Feherty said. "She almost killed Annika."

Indeed, that seemed the only thing capable of stopping her.

Sorenstam showed she was human, but ultimately she just ran away with it.

Sorenstam joined Mickey Wright as the only player to successfully defend in three majors. Wright won all four majors back-to-back, and Sorenstam could match that with a victory later this year on the Women's British Open. AP

Robillos lifts Taguig past Spring-Laguna

TAGUIG—Jerwenn Audrey Robillos struck from under in the last 2.8 seconds to lift host Pretend Taguig past Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna, 79-69, Sunday in the NBC (National Basketball Conference) national championship at the Ciudad Deportiva here.

The Cooking Oil-Masters of NBC president Emmanuel "Tex" Pacific and Laguna Gov. Teresita Lazaro led from the start and were still ahead, 69-68, when Robillos let one undergoal and from a pass by ex-PBL enforcer Epic Gonzalez.

Robillos was voted best player of the game.

It was a heartbreaking loss for the top Laguna, one of the Northern Division favorites in the tournament sponsored by Shoemart, Spring Cooking Oil, Sulpicio Lines, PCSO, Air Philippines, Supercat, Accel, Skechers Spring Mineral Water, Lumiere and Shikiwa.

Action goes back to the south on Friday when the Rizal Warriors try to repeat over the Cagayan de Oro Steers at 5:30 p.m. at the University of Mindanao gym in Bolo City.

The Warriors are paving the Southern Division with two straight wins the other week—86-84 in overtime over the Steers and 92-84 over the Ormoc Cobras.

The scores:

TAGUIG 79—Robillos 16, Arriola 11, Ilo 10, Bernardo 7, Mendoza 6, Abalos 5, Jr. Jones 5, Cha 5, Reyes 5, Dimal 5, Magsaysay 5, Magalong 2.

SPRING-LAGUNA 69—Espartinez 15, Reyes 14, Gaston 8, Ignacio 7, Mercado 6, Ferrer 4, Mendoza 4, Ramos 4, Ramirez 3.

Quarters: 17-19, 32-31, 49-48, 79-69.

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Give 'tax on text' a chance, Congress urged

By Michelle V. Rosca and Clarissa S. Bolino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is asking legislators to give the Macapagal administration a chance to explain the merits of its "tax on text" proposal before they dance it down.

Given the daunting task of solving the government's current financial problems, the DOF said that imposing a tax on text messaging, a lucrative revenue source, would help ensure budget sense.

The government's budget deficit, which results from higher expenditures and lower revenues, is expected to reach P197.8 billion this year. The government hopes to gradually reduce it over the next few years and eventually wipe it out by 2009.

"If we are all agreeable to the notion of having a balanced budget by 2009, then everybody should be willing to make a little sacrifice," said Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan.

Tan said it was only fair that in crafting a balanced budget that the government would not borrow more and then reduce its growing debt. As of February this year, the national government's outstanding debt stood at P4.12 trillion.

"It is everybody's responsibility, and not only of the government, to help improve the country's poor fiscal position, which has often been cited as a major drag to economic development efforts," Tan said.

The DOF official said that while the government has already undertaken belt-tightening measures to reduce expenditures, these were not enough to solve the deficit problem. She explained that a cut in spending should be accompanied by higher revenues, and that text messaging seemed to have the hottest potential to raise more revenue for the cash-starved government.

But while the executive branch is still preparing to lobby for the passage of the "tax on text" in the next Congress, legislators have already fanned the proposal. They said imposing a tax on text would only burden consumers.

"We have clear lists. Ralph Recto (chair of the ways and means committee), Sen. Manuel Villar (chair of the finance committee), [Rep.] Joselito Joey Francis Bengzon and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile (chair of the public services committee) have said they were not going to allow the tax on text proposal to become approved.

But the DOF official said the proposal must not be so burdensome for consumers. She said telecommunication companies should be asked not to pass on the tax to their customers.

"The royalty the telcos really earn from text is only P1 billion. And so if only they will shoulder it, then consumers will not be heavily burdened," Tan told reporters.

According to a revenue memo prepared by the Department of Finance, the tax rates that the government is considering are one centavo, 10 centavos and 25 centavos for each text message. DOF estimates showed that the government could make as much as almost P600 million a year if it were to

Lending by banks inched up in April

By Doris C. Dumlao

LENDING by the country's commercial banks remained flat for the second straight month in April from a year ago, an continued caution ahead of the May presidential election.

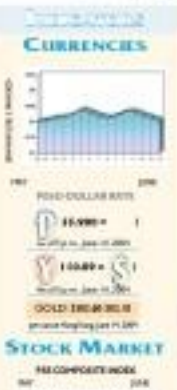
The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that the nation's outstanding loans rose by a meager 0.9 percent to P1.5 trillion as of end-April 2004 from the same period last year.

The growth in bank lending in April was unchanged from a slight improvement from the 0.6-percent annual increase registered in March and the 1.3-percent contraction in February.

"Commercial bank loans to the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector posted a marked increase of 12.6 percent in April, which is about twice the 6.4-percent annual growth registered in the previous month," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

The growth in bank lending to the three sectors also contributed to the continued rise in the outstanding loans of commercial banks. Loans to the transportation and communication sector grew by 7.3 percent, elec-

(continued on A2)



Stocks jump 1.24% on bargain hunting

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I fell for a dizzy blonde

MR. BEARBULL

Rose Neilhayes

SORRY about last week but I collapsed a bout of vertigo. It started about Friday and lasted 5 days. My blood pressure and pulse were normal so I had my blood tested. The technician nearly dyed when she saw it was green but I showed her that I am a registered alien. I have a tendency to pessimism because my blood type is RH negative.

My cholesterol was fine so they checked my ears. As the doctor could see right through to the other side, there was nothing in between that would have caused it. In desperation, they ordered my kidneys to be tested, my veins, brains and bus. Unfortunately the doctor's handwriting leaves much to be desired and the nurse read it as bum.

So she took me to the proctologist who inserted two fingers into my bum. I asked him if he was Miss Piliwo I asked why he used two fingers, he replied, "In case you need a second opinion." Finally they ordered a CT scan, but I couldn't find a cat, so I took it to Quezon and got better. I am thankful and grateful to everything Miss Universe. All those boobs brought back happy memories to me and saved like an upbeat heave.

The government is querying the expenditure of P382 million on boots. But if you expect the soldiers to march with rubber footwear, they might suffer the agony of defeat. (Editor, don't smile).

It is back to school and the teachers attended my wife's birthday party with a lot of blackened eyes and bite patches. Here are some of them:

Please excuse Tom as he had dyslexia one and his boom leak.

Shelly visited Manila. She is 11 and has started administering.

Roy was unable to attend as he has boom stomach.

Please excuse my daughter. She has been under the doctor all night.

I am sorry my son was 3 hours late. I forgot to make him up and I did not find him until I started making the beds.

Please forgive Mary for being absent. She was sick and I had to have her shot. If permane she means vaccinated.

(This is my favorite one). I aged again for Pauline by adding one hour to her 4 hours without taking a breath. I pronounce him PHILLIBUSTER of the year. Welcome back, Miriam Defensor. Your living suit and sarcasm might bring some humor into the house.

I have just been sorting about our stock market for several weeks. There are two reasons. One is that I don't want to give RUF and SELL recommendations until the President is inaugurated, and I want to see whether the administration will accept the results or not. The second reason is that it is confusing, i.e. it is coming down to its core. However, out of crisis rules, has dropped to 1998 million and there is nothing going on except in OPM (Other People's Money), which traded 1.4 billion shares last Friday a consensus, in which DPM has a 3.7 percent stake, is drilling for oil and natural gas off Iloilo. All the speculation is local.

I have been watching out my coreadjacent eyes day, and the degree of risk is still having the jackpots. Ilonzo three weeks ago, it fell to three and I said it was time to BUY, providing you were prepared to accept the political risk. Last week, when the Philippine Stock Exchange Index hit the degree of risk reached 96.3 and I advised everyone to SELL. Today it is higher in hopes that the count will be resumed.

I watched Alan Greenspan's speech to the IMF (International Money Fine Fund). He was concerned about the US economy, which added 980,000 new jobs in three months and 1.3 billion since the year begin. Professor points to May rose 2.2 percent but, upwards

Give 'tax on text' a chance . . .

[illegible] will impose a use of one centavo each on messages, PLDT [illegible] first of 30 centavos, and P13.76 billion or 28 centavos.

Telecom executives have scored the government's plan as it would unduly burden the sector that had been paying billions in taxes yearly.

Globe said it has [illegible] year alone, is poised about P2.5 billion in taxes after registering P16.3 billion in net profit in 2003.

Smart said it was even cited by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for being one of the top taxpayers in the country after posting a net income of P16.1 billion last year.

Text messaging had made Globe and Smart very profitable as the country's 22 million subscribers send an average of seven text messages daily, making the Philippines the world's text capital.

"The telecom sector is so heavily taxed already. And if the government would impose a tax on texting, it might discourage the 22 million subscribers to use the service," Smart president Napoleon Nazareno said.

Globe Telecom president Fernando Arbasen added that imposing a new tax on texting would sometimes double taxation.

Small & Associates' analyst if the taxes are shouldered by the companies or the customers because at the end of the day, it would be subscribers that would get hit," Alfonso said.

Taking text messaging could generate much revenues as partially since telecom companies handle roughly 180 million messages daily. Outside of the free text included in the prepaid and postpaid plans, each SMS is charged P1.

Smart handles about 130 million text messages a day from its more than 15 million subscribers while Globe said that as much as 80 million text messages pass through its network of 9.3 million subscribers.

The Macapagal administration is planning to slap as much as 28 centavos in additional taxes on each text message.

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Gov't has not much choice on Napocor, Palace says

By Cynthia Cabacungan Jr. and Miguel L. Ito

IT IS a big and bitter pill to swallow, but Malacañang says the government has little choice but to assume the P600 billion debt load of the National Power Corp. this year.

"We just have to bite the bullet," Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a statement. "We can neither wish our debts away or turn our back to them without risking a sudden socio-economic calamity."

Bunye said there was no going around Napocor's debts which, through neglect, had piled up through several administrations.

"The neglect of the past cannot be cured by tarnishing present efforts, unconstitutional or otherwise," Bunye said.

Bunye noted that the government was compelled to assume the power firm's loans and guaranteed repayment to make sure that there would be no interruption in electricity services.

But critics see the controversial move in a different light.

Yesterday, the Freedom from Debt Coalition and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) warned that the country's fiscal condition would take a turn for the worse if government were to proceed with its plan to assume Napocor's P600 billion debt.

In a statement, the FDC said the national government was already suffering from a budget deficit of around P52.06 billion, or assuming almost half of the cash-strapped power firm's debts would do nothing but weigh down the country's fiscal condition.

The group also pointed out that, under Republic Act 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, the national government could only assume up to P200 billion of Napocor's debts in exchange for equity in the power firm.

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong earlier said that the assumption of Napocor's debts would restore investor confidence in the power sector and make the state firm more attractive to potential investors.

But the FDC pointed out that this move would only burden the government more, while allowing the private sector to merely cash in on their investments.

While on Philippine state debt was its up in the road given a meeting of the government said it would absorb Napocor's debts.

"There is a chance for the budget deficit projection this year to be adjusted higher because of the Napocor debt," one trader said.

The Philippines, Asia's most active sovereign debt issuer after Japan, aims to cap its budget deficit at FY07.8 billion this year and achieve a balanced budget by 2009.

In a statement, Amatong said that the government move to assume Napocor's debts would not affect its plan to balance its budget five years from now. She said Napocor's debts would be paid for by its increases Oan-Congress would have to approve. With reports from Reuters, AFP

Tariff on Singapore petrochem lifted

By Bernie W. Dorotheo

MALACAÑANG has issued an order granting temporarily relief of tariffs on some petrochemical products imported from Singapore.

The order is part of a 2003 compensation agreement which ended a trade dispute between the Philippines and Singapore.

Under the agreement, which was adopted last last year, the Philippines would compensate Singapore some $16 million to $5 million through the reduction of tariff on coal petrochemical materials.

Signed on May 21, Executive Order No. 216 grants a temporary removal of tariffs on Singapore products that are not produced here, but a great deal of which are exported to the Philippines.

The trade dispute between the Philippines and Singapore arose when RP officials decided to delay the scheduled reduction of tariffs on petrochemical products starting 2003.

Under the transition effective preferential treatment scheme of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Free Trade Agreement, the Philippines was supposed to lower the tariffs on petrochemical products to 5 percent.

But in 2003, the government decided on lower protocol, allowing member-countries to temporarily delay or suspend its tariff reduction on certain products, to protect the local petrochemical industry. Malacañang then issued a list of petrochemical products whose tariffs would be maintained at between 7 and 10 percent.

Singapore reacted with a demand for compensation for damages that its exporters were said to have suffered due to the high Philippine tariffs.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Editor: Cheche Banal-Formoso

MONDAY ARTS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 3DU
• THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY HOME & FASHION • SUNDAY SURPRISES

'At M-Tech, the patient does not have to wait for the doctor for a long time'

A little pampering is what the doctor orders

Text by Ravenia C. Burgos
Photos by Boboy Jalbuena

A HOSPITAL easy to surely something to look forward to. But M-Tech Medical Hospital may just change that.

The hospital, aside from providing full-service conventional care, has similar concerns, pain, clinical psychology and child behavior clinics, and provides services like executive check-ups, geriatric treatment screenings, physical and rehabilitation medicine, occupational and industrial medicine, among others. It has a staff of 100 doctors and 78 paramedics.

Established three years ago as a diagnostic and therapeutic center, M-Tech [illegible] opened its doors as a hospital last October. Located at 379 San Gil Puyat Ave., Makati, it has five floors with 100 beds and warm, comfortable interiors.

According to Dr. Angelito Reyes, M-Tech chair, the hospital aims to elevate the standard of healthcare delivery. "We intend to give a more personalized care rather than run-of-the-mill service. Here, the patient does

ALIPTEQUE

RADIOLOGY section's Siemens Emotion Spiral CT

LAWYER Armando Lagos, chief executive officer; Dr. Ramon Arevalo, executive vice president for medical affairs; Dr. Angelina Reyes, chair; and Dr. Leopoldo Lucero, president

A little pampering is what the doctor orders

SONOLINE ultrasound at the radiology section

STRESS examination room in the cardiology section

From page C1

not have to wait for the doctor for a long time," she says.

Dr. Leopoldo Lucero, M.Tech president, notes that the difficulties with larger centers and hospitals is they are a bit inexperienced in providing medical care.

"Filipinos assume they like to be pampered to an focus on their needs and safety and the giving of quality care. We follow closely the international parameters on the provision of medical services. Our younger practitioners are closely supervised by the senior staff. Some may look at it as interference in the provision of medical care but we'd like to think that our staff is open to discussion," he says.

In the competitive health-care industry, Doctors Reyes and Lucero think one of their advantages is the ease they take to make our patients our safe inside their hospital. This is why M-Tech was designed with an air exchange system with air filters and absolutely, a protection to minimize bacterial infections. "We make sure that our hospital is very clean; we which we have now gained a reputation," Dr. Reyes says.

In health care, as in other fields, consumers are more savvy and sophisticated than ever before. They know they can choose where to go for medical treatment, and they are increasingly making choices based on factors other than clinical care. Room service is one way M-Tech responds to patients' demand for better customer service.

"Food is carefully prepared. We don't allow the bringing in of food or room dispersal can be controlled. Inpatients are happier more. Do caring," Dr. Reyes says.

The hospital has a suite room for single-occupancy with Internet connection, cable television, Lazy Boy for the parents and king size for the patient, coffee table and refrigerator; a suite room for double-occupancy, a semi-private area with four rooms and one refrigerator, a single-room with toilet and bath.

Trained colorful nurses from Europe, United States and the Philippines adorn the walls of these rooms.

"M-Tech is like a hotel. And we'd like to portray a boutique type of hospital with very good services. That's why such patients are here: they want to prolong their stay," Dr. Reyes says.

State-of-the-art facilities

Managed by the Makati Technical Health-care Management Inc., M-Tech is equipped with state-of-the-art medical equipment and

EMERGENCY room

GYM in the physical therapy and rehab section

anesthesia at all times a full complement of doctors representing all specialties to minimize patient waiting times.

"The results of laboratory tests can be acquired in less than three minutes," lawyer Armando Lagos, chief executive officer, proudly notes. "The lab candidate to grant for 130 international tests. Since M-Tech's lab has been classified by the Department of Health as tertiary (highest level for medical institutions), it can service all kinds of test requirements for other clinics and laboratories."

Aside from offering standard services offered by other major hospitals, M-Tech also has the Cancer Care Clinic and Neuroscience operated Clinic.

The Cancer Care Clinic aims "to provide medical care and the physical, mental and spiritual support needed by patients and their families in a holistic and integrated manner."

The Neurodevelopmental Clinic, on the other hand, provides early identification, diagnosis and intervention for children diagnosed with a developmental disability and those children at risk of developing a developmental disability.

"All of M-Tech's healthcare services consist of promotive, curative and rehabilitative assessment and programs," Dr. Lucero says.

E-mail the author at thelpn@hotmail.com.ph

MAMMOGRAPH machine

My 'kind' of people

"WHAT type of people attend your seminars?" The question is often asked as if those who attend my seminars are a brand of swindlers or nuts.

Well, I have news for them. The people who attend my seminars range from ordinary people like students, housewives and employees to executives, executives, businessmen, doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals, including diplomats and theologians.

I have also had students from countries like France, Switzerland, Sweden, United States, Libya, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Germany, Austria, Italy, Belgium and India. Interest in paranormal and psychic phenomena is universal and knows no national or ethnic boundaries.

I remember fondly some interesting sessions involving my foreign participants.

In San Francisco, I had a student in my ESP course (esoteric perception) class who was a scientist in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. His dream was to head a space mission using the power of his mind, i.e. through telekinesis, just like Uri Geller. When he was able to bend a spoon in my class, he jumped up and down with joy like a child. "I did it! I did it!" he shouted.

Several Catholic priests and nuns from India, as well as members of some religious communities and evangelical movements, attended my seminar on "Soulmates, Karma and Reincarnation." They all found the seminar very enlightening.

A German theologian from Silliman University, Dumaguete City, with a doctorate in divinity, attended my Basic ESP and Intuition Development seminar, and confessed he found nothing in the seminar that was incompatible with or contrary to Christian teachings.

A more interesting reaction to locate that at one time, in the early '90s, I did a two-day seminar for a group of Catholic nuns embarking on a new pastoral path involving prophecy and astrology in the media. The group decided to separate from its original mother organization but with its permission. The nuns wanted to learn how to enhance their intuitive and psychic abilities, as well as their spirituality, not in the traditional way. They believed they had many God-given gifts that were not fully developed, and they wanted to learn all about such gifts.

At first I was hesitant to accept their invitation because they called the session a "retreat" and I am not a priest. But they insisted, so I did and the nuns were grateful for the new learnings.

Physicians and other medical practitioners seem to be attracted to my seminars. In one of my sessions, the Inner Mind Development, they learned how to develop psychic extrasensory powers to enhance their diagnostic and healing skills. Most of the ESP sessions, they learned how to do psychometry and also diagnose illness through the pendulum.

Many professionals who attended my seminars were amazed at the scientific nature of my presentation, devoid of superstitions or occult implications. One businessman from Tacloban, who attended my seminar on Inner Mind Development, remarked that my presentation about Our Inner Mind is couched in scientific terms. But he did not know scientific things that were not in medical books.

This is true because my dissertations about the basics go beyond medical and orthodox science.

So those who think that the people who attend my workshops are a bunch of nuts may have to revise their initial impression once they participate in them.

Listen in to my KMBT radio program every Sunday, 7-8:30 p.m.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime C. Licauco

LIFESTYLE

Using a treadmill correctly

WELL AND GOOD

Weta Javier

Treadmills have great potential for injury because, at high speed, they can throw you off

Course on yogic sleep

MANTAMIN Oriental's Pure Yoga conducts a course on Yogic Sleep, June 15-20.

Yogic sleep is the art of putting the body to rest while keeping the mind active. It is supposed to enhance memory and unleash creative energy while curing stress-related ailments.

Prakash Singh Bedi, resident yoga instructor and yogacara director, says yogic sleep is good to deep mental, emotional and physical relaxation.

A full course comprised of six one-hour sessions is offered at P2,000 per participant. Classes are conducted at 10-11:30 a.m. or 7-8:30-9:45 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, or Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Call 7388888/cloud 2308.

New 'buko' drink in the market

A MIX ready to drink buko juice is now available in the market.

Lipa Fresh Buko Juice is supposed to be the product of new technology that better preserves the freshness of the product. Batangas Say of Lipa Fresh Buko Juice says the technology comes packaging, sealing and sterilization to make sure the product maintains its quality.

She says Lipa Fresh Buko Juice, approved by the Bureau of Food and Drug in 1997, passed strict Japanese quality standards five years ago.

The beverage is available in 12-oz cups and bottles.

Mercedes Collanta, coach of the Philippines' badminton and tennis teams who coaches in the Ateneo de Philippines College of Human Kinetics and is a consultant for the Food and Nutrition, says buko juice contains a lot of vitamins and minerals.

A recent study by one of the country's premier universities suggests that buko juice may provide the same benefits as, in some more than water and other sports drinks. It contains an insulin amount of protein and less sodium than commercial drinks.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Prone back leg lift–bent leg

TIGHTENS and tones the buttocks and front thighs

Equipment:
Exercise mat. Ankle weights are optional.

Exercise technique:

1. Lie face-down with your hands underneath your forehead. Your right leg is straight and your left leg is bent with the foot over the knee.

2. Lift your left thigh a few inches off the floor.

3. Slowly retract the thigh to the starting position and do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. It is very important to keep the abdominals tight and the hip bones in contact with the floor; otherwise the lower back will arch.

2. Squeeze your buttocks to start the movement rather than letting the lower back lift the thigh.

3. Don't expect a large movement. The thigh will only be lifted a few inches.

4. If you feel any kind of pain in the lower back, avoid this exercise.

Repetitions:
Do 15 repetitions then switch to the other leg.

Using a treadmill correctly

Turn page 6-3

treadmill for balance. After you get the hang of it, let go and let your arms swing the way they would if you were walking outside.

Look straight ahead

Aim your feet head to follow your eyes, look straight ahead so you are in the middle of the belt. Be aware of all times of where you are on the belt. There is a tendency to move to the sides, front or back of the machine. If you are too close to the front you could stumble over the hood. If you are too far back you could fall off.

Of all the cardio machines, treadmill have the greatest potential for injury because of high speed, they can throw you off. If you look over your shoulder, you can get disoriented and lose your balance. Do not look back when someone calls you. Do not swoop down to tie your shoelaces or to pick up something.

Always start the treadmill with both your feet on top of the side panels. Put you feet on the belt only when you are sure it is moving slowly. Know where the emergency stop button is and don't hesitate to use it if you feel you are being pulled backward.

From the speeding up and slowing down, straddling the side panels and pushing the emergency button a few times until you are satisfied you can use the machine safely.

Stop the machine

Do not get the machine to pause or low it running while answering a telephone call or going to the restroom. Someone may get on the treadmill and get thrown off.

Even if a treadmill's surface is softer than the pavement outside, never a good pair of running shoes for support workout.

Treadmills burn the same number of calories as running or walking outdoors. But you can a little more uphill on a treadmill than you would up a mountain.

Today's machines have control panels with flashing lights and numbers to give you monitoring feedback on how many kilometers you have walked or run, what your current heart rate is, and how many calories you have burned. Many people focus too much on the feedback during workout. This leads them to "cheat" to squeeze every single extra calorie.

What is cheating? Holding on to the handrails for dear life while the treadmill inclined to the highest position. The incline makes the machine "think" you are climbing a "hill." The calorie readout will indicate a far higher calorie burn than what you are actually getting.

Before machines ask for your weight to calculate how many calories you are burning. This helps to keep the error rate of 10-30 percent to a minimum because it takes more energy to move a heavier mass than to move a lighter one.

The fitness that don't ask for your weight usually base their calculation on a 154-pound male. So if you weigh much less than that, the calorie reading displayed could be wrong.

Even if the machine asks for your weight, the calculation could still be off because, no matter how sophisticated and high-tech the machine, it cannot possibly calculate how much is lean mass (muscles and everything else that is not fat) and how much is fat. The more lean body mass you have, the more calories you burn.

Two people could weigh the same, but the leaner one will burn more calories per minute. This is one reason you should increase your lean mass through resistance training (weights, rubber bands and body-weight exercises).

Don't get stuck

As you become fitter, try the other program in a treadmill often. Don't get stuck in the same program. When you keep doing the same thing, you stop seeing results.

And don't make the treadmill the only cardio machine you use. You burn fewer calories per minute when your body is used to a certain pattern of movement because it becomes more energy efficient.

In the early '90s when my sessions was new, a study found that participants burned an average of 8.5 calories per minute. From years later, participants burned only 7.5 calories per minute. Researchers said, with several exercise sessions per week, the difference could result in 5 to 6 pounds gained over a year.

So do some sessions running on other machines.

Next week: Cross trainers, steppers and bikes

Visit www.fitnessfitness.info

Easy-to-swallow throat care tips

BACTIROL, the only oral anti-septic recognized by the organization of Philippine oto-rhino-laryngologists, has embarked on a campaign to educate people on the importance of voice and throat care.

It provides some facts about voice and ways to care for the throat.

People are born with a particular voice type, which suggests the kind of personality they have.

Voice quality—the overall tone and audibility—can also reveal one's personality. Physical health, general well-being, diet, age, gender and even posture add distinction to a person's voice.

Home environment and culture influence accent, manner of speaking and tone of voice, among others.

Thought and emotions are reflected in the voice, as well as experience and occupation. The voice is also influenced by how a person regards himself/herself and his/ her station.

Under the throat is one of the most overworked parts of the body, its care is often neglected.

Throat care can be a simple daily regimen. Drinking 10 glasses of water a day, refraining caffeine and alcohol intake and quitting smoking can help maximize the quality of one's voice.

A healthy diet and less spicy foods, carbonated drinks, chocolates and mint-flush also help keep the throat in good working condition. Talking too long or too loudly has to be avoided.

The regular gargling with an antiseptic mouthwash like Bactirol helps treat and prevent bacterial infection and soreness in the throat.

A conflicted heart and confused mind contribute to 'dis-ease' that can lead to disease

Never-ending beauty, inside and out

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

WHY NEED having just crossed the sun, mangoes of late, youth and abundance have been generously showered upon us. Or so the optimists and worshipers believe.

And so the column today is dedicated to those who believe in never-ending beauty, both inside and out.

Looking your best

To look your absolute best:

• Capture the desire—for will never look good if you don't feel good. Achieving desire must be there to begin with. Look-tip-good has its roots in feeling good.

• Set a standard/goal—If you don't have a role model, then make one up. Or, better yet, imagine how you looked your best at some stage in your life. Then strive to reach that "ideal you" once more.

• Bear fit—Be conscious of your eating habits. Always remember that how you look on the outside depends largely on what you do on the inside. And you do know that one of the benchmarks of good health is glowing skin.

Great skin drink

2 tbsp soy food protein powder
1 tbsp whey
1½ c soy milk (fresh at least—try the least and fresh soymilk at Bonnie's, Hapmine, Price Smart)
3 ice cubes
2 tbsp fresh fruit (banana or your choice)

Mix in blender for one minute. Take for breakfast.

• Eat a balanced diet and take extra supplements—multivitamin/mineral supplements antioxidants (A, C, E), amino acids, co-enzyme Q10, Vitamin C (with bioflavonoids, 500-1,000 mg daily; Vitamin B complex with pantothenic acid, 10 mg; MSM (methylsulfonylmethane), 1,000 mg (great for collagen formation); essential fatty acids like flaxseed oil, 15-30 mg zinc (for repair of blemished skin); 1 g L-cysteine daily (between meals with juice).

• Exercise regularly—If you can't hit the gym three times a week, then walk every day for 30 minutes.

• Stay in harmony—A conflicted heart and confused mind will contribute to your "dis-ease" and disease will set in. Practice embracing the balance and keeping your mind quiet. Order yourself to shut up!

• Take moderation with care—Certain drugs have side effects. Many can affect the skin and create rashes, jaundice, flaky-dry skin, itching. They may even lead to depression. Contraceptives and tranquilizers, sleeping pills, antihistamines have been known to cause skin problems. Prolonged use of drugs can lead to addiction and illness. Before popping a pill, try a natural alternative first. Remember to consult your doctor.

• Get enough sleep—All you need is 6-8 hours. If you are not sleeping well, try these:

Take one pinch calcium calcium (200 mg) and magnesium (120 mg tablet) three times daily, 100 mg Vitamin B6 and 100 mg niacinamide. Together they will stimulate the brain to produce more serotonin (essential to sleep).

Hungry at bedtime? A light turkey sandwich and cup of chamomile (or valerian, skullcap) or 1 mg of melatonin 15 minutes before bedtime will help.

• Be nice to yourself and others. Practice being an agreeable person, one who is pleasant, friendly, warm, cooperative and gracious rather than the complete opposite. Most people who can't be nice to others are also hard on themselves. Often, the most hard-hearted personalities are suffering the most. If you can't be nice, this is a signal that your soul needs healing.

Beauty bath aura rinse

One cup cool tap water (fresh sea water is best) or mix 2 cups salt in a pail of water. Before bathing, rinse yourself with salt water. This washes your aura or allowing energy. Simultaneously, visualize that the bad energy is being washed away.

Healing ritual

Write down on a piece of paper the one thing you like to change about yourself. There is something in you wanting for improvement, transformation or renewal. Read out loud what you wrote and when it should be accomplished, say this affirmation: "Beginning today, a new and improved me is emerging. So be it."

Love and light!

Reference: "Vitamin Bible for the 21st Century" by Earl Mindell

BORJAUGH Medical Care Institute has four operating rooms and a separate eye surgery center.

New hospital opens in Quezon City

BORJAUGH Medical Care Institute Ambulatory and Surgical Clinic opened recently on the 6/F Cyberwall Building, Eastwood City Libis, Quezon City.

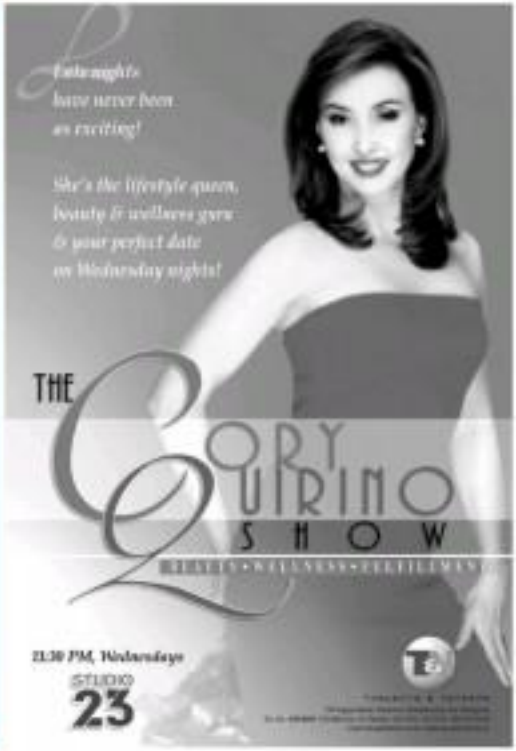
The 1,500-sq. m. treatment center, the biggest in the Philippines, is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It offers a wide range of clinical and diagnostic services. The clinic accepts walk-in patients, referrals, health maintenance organization cardholders and employees whose companies have tie-ups with the group.

The hospital offers all the services and has the facilities expected of medical institutions. It has also a complete lineup of diagnostic imaging equipment.

The institute, with Dr. Gabriel Jose Borjaugh, an ophthalmologist, as medical director, has 16 fully equipped, consulting suites to ensure the privacy of patients. A well-appointed suite is reserved for executives. In the waiting area executive selection salon is there.

Call 6877195/ 1369/1776.

The hospital offers personalized service at its state-of-the-art facility in Eastwood Cyber City, Libis.



The most interesting people and personalities leave their mark in the pages of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine
INQUIRER

HOT dudes and cool gal. Models Tor Lee, Alvin Alcobendas and Broderick Lloyd with Gloria Dayrit.

GORGEOUS (l to r) Valerie de los Santos, Edward Morales and Bobby Manangkil

YOUNG and yummy Gayle Ong with Angel Co and Charmaine Palermo

Beauty is this book's excuse for being

PRETTY ramp babes Antoinette Duenas, Isabel Rivera and Ria Francisco

HEAVEN shakers Joyce Ortaliz, Patrizia Rosas and Mona Tamayo

BCI's Greenhills branch reopened with an after-noon affair hosted by Ronggo-Gutie Christian Vasquez and Manille gal Angel Aquino

BACOLOD Chicken Inasal gets bigger in Greenhills. Gracing the affair are San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito and mom Gaia Estrada, here with BCI grand main-larch Baby and husband Joe Tanalgo

THE MAG FOUR. Photographer Raymund Isaac, makeup artist Patrick Rosas, Bahay Kalinga Foundation representative Bea Zobel Jr. and Nina's top gal, Rica King

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Vea Hagana on Kodak Max

Nina was super-stoked in full force by brilliant marketing director-cohort-mom Rica King; brand managers Ida Blaza and Belle Ortega; and marketing assistant Alice Ceysson.

"We at Nina are extremely proud of Patrick and Raymund, for coming up with this great book that celebrates the beauty of the Filipina and her alluring skin, appreciating the value of having great skin in creating beauty," said that marketable lady for all seasons, Rica King.

The launch of "Maue" was for the benefit of the Bahay Kalinga Foundation's Bahlod Batangan Day Care Center. Representing the foundation to receive the symbolic presentation of donation from Patrick and Raymund was my paitanggi, Bea Zobel Jr. He was escorted by her father, the pillar of the Ayalas, witty raconteur gentleman-ar, Jaime Zobel de Ayala, who looked elegante.

The epitome of glamour, dusty-smoked sweet and shaker sensation Maki Zobel said in her foreword, "This book is truly a perfect opportunity to crystallize Patrick's work and get him to his glory among all the great artists, immortalized forever."

Well, if these women's faces are their fortune, you can be sure they'll never have to pay income tax. And hey, remember, whether you are beautiful or handsome, or ugly, it is always nice to have a clean, well-scrubbed face.

Check it out but, palanggas, as copies of the "Maue" collector's edition book are limited.

For advance orders, call Julie and Agatha of Inga at 7238211 or 7213501, or e-mail to ing@ingaworld.com.

Twin celebration

It was a double whammy when one of my favorite stores, the popular, unbeatable Smoked Chicken Inasal (BCI), a chain that offers the yummy chicken inasal and the sarap choice of mouth-watering Ilonggo specialties, had a twin celebration that sparkled great "Fiesta 21."

Right after the successful opening of its eighth branch at the 2/L of the Eastwood Cybermall inside Eastwood City in Libis, the hard-working Tanalgo children behind Bacolod Chicken Inasal, mga palanggas Rose, Ring and JM, immediately prepared for another grand event.

That was the reopening of a bigger BCI Greenhills branch.

The store, located at the fringe of the Greenhills Shopping Center, now accommodates 176 diners. It has two function rooms that are great venues for parties, from christening and wedding receptions, to meetings and seminars.

Our buffet serves rice, grilled-to-perfection and fellow Ilonggos packed southern style with yummy inasal and loads of fun as they were treated to Ilonggo hospitality living up to its reputation for offering the best from the City of Smiles. BCI had the popular Manilyn Dimwit to entertain us with their colorful upbeat dance numbers, palanggas.

Ilonggo mega hotshot television personality Christina Vasquez and VJ JM Rodriguez provided the glitz and bounce during the Eastwood branch opening.

At the BCI Greenhills relaunch, Christine chased the stage with screen and TV host, gorgeous Angel Aquino.

Check out the BCI branches closest to you, palanggas. You'll leave the place saying, "Sa mismo! gid ya. (It's really too good!)."

Hey, you just thought of something. We actually eat chicken before it is born and after it is dead. At hala! Think about it!

ONE of Patrick Rosas' favorite muses, Gretchen Barretto

DON Jaime Zobel de Ayala

STUNNINGLY beautiful Nikki Peterson Tenebroso on a rare night out

MOTHER and daughter act. Emily and Celine Lopez

COOL LOVERS. Beautiful Bea Valdes and handsome Archie Rodrigues

SOCIALITES Nina Chicken, too. Louie Rodriguez, Tony Alcaraz, Lory Melo, grand main-larch Bisky Tanalgo and Mila Hernandez

JOEY Santos, GM of Greenhills Shopping Center, with engineer Rene Nieves, BCI's Ross Tanalgo-Melo, and Land Bukidnon of Greenhills Shopping Center

CHICKEN lovers Lee Cheng, Frida Sibulo, Kat Ong, and John and Mercy Kwanpol

WHERE there's Bacolod Chicken Inasal, you'll find owner Bobby Tanalgo with his sisters Rose Tanalgo-Melo and (far right) Ring Tanalgo, and Karen Bulkeley-Rose

LIFESTYLE

Diabetics get 'berry' promising news

NEWTON FITNESS CENTER
College Entrance Test Review
TEL: (02)882-8147

DIABETES? GO ALL NATURAL!

Traditionally prized for its roots, ginseng may have more to offer health-wise through its fruits

By Anne A. Jardeleza

AN EXTRACT from an exotic, ruby red fruit may offer a solution to diabetes and obesity.

While lifestyle and eating habits are keys to the management of these problems, recent findings suggest the berries of the ancient Chinese herbal plant ginseng may have even greater potential in treating diabetes and obesity.

In a May 2002 report, researchers at the University of Olmsted's Drug Center for Herbal Medicine Research found that fluid extracted from ginseng berry "increased normal blood sugar levels in diabetic mice ... had better glucose tolerance test, which measures how quickly [a] person glucose could be removed from the blood] ... caused the loss of [a] more than 50 percent of [the diabetic and obese mice's] weight in 12 days ... improved insulin secretion and insulin sensitivity ... lowered cholesterol levels."

The study also found that the "treated mice ate 15 percent less and were 20 percent more active than untreated mice," while untreated, activity gained 5 percent of their weight in 31 days. Once the treatment stopped, however, weight gain gradually resumed.

New discovery

Ginseng root has been a traditional Chinese medicine for many ailments for more than 2,000 years. Today it is among the top five best-selling herbs in the world. The powder nutritional value of its root berries, however, is a new discovery.

Beneficial effects are derived mainly

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Help for falling hair

TV personality Iza Calzado likes a good shampoo that strengthens her hair inside out.

PROCTER & Gamble has come up with the Pantene Hair Fall Control Shampoo.

Formulated with Pro-Vitamin B5, it helps reduce falling hair due to breakage by 50 percent, within two months of regular use.

Pantene Hair Fall Control Shampoo strengthens the hair shaft, resulting in less breakage; makes hair soft and smooth so that it can be combed or brushed more easily and untangled when wet; reduces flyaway hair; and increases hair moisture and enhances hair shine, for more beautiful hair.

Even people who do not suffer from excessive falling hair due to breakage, will benefit from regular use of Pantene Hair Fall Control Shampoo.

Pantene also offers a free tips to keep the hair from falling.

To minimize breakage and make hair soft and shiny after washing, first rinse hair gently with a rinse) then squeeze with a wide-toothed comb.

Avoid hair damage while swimming in chlorinated pool water by wearing a swimming cap, or deep-conditioning your hair before entering the pool. Polish and condition hair immediately after swimming.

When staying outdoors for a long period, wear a hat to prevent sun-damage to hair.

Choose hair care products that are gentle, preferably without any harsh ingredients. For daily use, get a shampoo that is gentle, easy detangling and moisturizing.

Something different for fitness buffs

If you want to keep fit but are bored with your current fitness programs, you may want to explore some new sports.

Plunge into the swimming pool for a game of underwater hockey, a game that began in South Africa. Played at the bottom of a pool by two teams of six, each player wears fins, mask and snorkel, and a glove and handguard for protection in covering.

The stick used is about a foot long, the puck (the "ball") is around three pounds, and the goal three meters long. The game takes 30 minutes, divided into two 15-minute parts.

The Philippine Underwater Hockey Confederation holds tournaments, exhibitions, clinics, seminars and demonstrations also has an Underwater Hockey School. Email PUHC at underwaterhockey@pldtdsl.net.

Pilates training was developed by Santa Monican conflict shaw/boxer James Pilates. The equipment consists of a Reformer, and with a 12x9 mat and 8 ft beam, made of wood or aluminum tubing. The mats and beams are manufactured by hand. The bottom of the mats fits in a small plastic cup on the front of the skateboard.

Those into aerobics can try Capoeira (kapoe-ra), a Brazilian innovation that combines fighting, breakdancing, gymnastics and music. Capoeira is believed to have evolved from the deadly fighting dance used by African slaves against their Portuguese colonizers.

Training sessions are held in Ermita centers like Centro Flamenco, Devanmoor Gym and The Bachelor Club in Makati City, and Bodyblitz Spa & Fitness Club in QC.

To avail of after any of the aforementioned activities, take Intl. Metro 282 available in Passionfruit Apple and Lychee Twist with actual bits.

UNDERWATER hockey

CAPOEIRA

Detox retreats to improve immune response

THE FARM at San Benito is holding Detox Retreats for Cancer, June 20-30; Cholesterol & Hypertension, July 4-13; for diabetes and arthritis, July 18-27; alcoholism and smoking cessation, Aug. 1-10; and asthma and skin disorders, Aug. 16-25.

A medically supervised detoxification program will help rid the body of toxins at the cellular level and facilitate a return to health.

A detox retreat is a time-honored way to keep immune response high as the body can handle toxicity and illness.

The Farm at San Benito in Barangay Tipakan, Lipa City, specializes in alternative preventative healing techniques that engage the body's self-healing capabilities.

In Metro Manila, call The Farm's Manila Mandarin sales office, tels. 753-8488 or 750-8888 local 72420; and in Lipa, call Dr. Jean Rosales or Dr. Edru Rivera at 6902195 or 6902175.

Visit the website at www.the-farm.com.ph.

WIND surfing

Diabetics get 'berry' promising news

GINSENOSIDE Re compound in ginseng berry is said to suppress the appetite and increase stamina.

SET YOUR SIGHTS ON SOME OF THE HOTTEST ACTIVITIES FROM RED MASTERCARD

JUNE 11-12
MOVIE TREAT
Fairmont City, Lipa
Flash your RED MasterCard for free movie tickets

June 19-20
COOKING DEMO
Shangri-La Plaza
Savor delicious meal ideas by Joey Mangaña from Myx! Tito! Vietboy Show and get exclusive deals from Campbell's. Swipe premium wines from Dulfigo and Wolf Blass.

June 26-27
FITNESS SAMPLER
Alabang Town Center
Join various workout programs and fun aquatics. Remember and Spiffy cleaning.

July 2-4
MAKEOVER SESSION
Robinsons Place Manila
Indulge in free beauty and skin care consultations, hand & head massages and vanity giveaways from Clarins.

July 8
CELEBRITY BARTENDING PARTY
Prince of Jaipur, The Fort
Attend an exclusive RED MasterCard-only appearance by Myx! Vhalla as celebrities bartend for charity. Proceeds will go to the Zamorian Foundation.

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